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Inter-Arab Affairs

Reactions to U.S. Lockerbie Charges Against Libya

Memo to League on 'Groundless' Accusations

NC2411134391 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1320 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—The Arab League General Secretariat has received a memorandum from the Libyan Jamahiriyah stressing that the U.S. accusations against two Libyan nationals concerning the bombing of a U.S. civilian airplane are groundless. Libya called on the Arab League to stand with it, support its position, and take a united stand on this issue.

Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid is scheduled to meet tomorrow with U.S. Ambassador in Cairo Robert Pelletreau as part of the Arab League's effort to contain this problem.

Transport Ministers Support Libya

LD2411100591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0700 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Excerpts] Tripoli, 23 Nov (JANA)—The work of the seventh session of the Arab Transport Ministers' Council continued yesterday evening. The ministers discussed and approved a number of issues on the agenda during the evening meeting. [passage omitted]

A number of ministers participating in this conference also spoke. Brother Salih 'Abdallah Muthanna, transportation minister of the Republic of Yemen, made a speech at the beginning in which he saluted the Libyan Arab people for hosting this meeting. The Yemeni minister referred to the threats and accusations against the Great Jamahiriyah by the United States and Britain with regard to the incident of the Pan Am flight over the town of Lockerbie in Britain. He said this was not the first time that the Jamahiriyah has been subjected to such accusations and threats. He emphasized the importance of referring this case to the international judiciary, so that those who had committed that operation would receive the punishment they deserve under neutral international law. The Yemeni minister stressed in conclusion that the Arab Transport Ministers' Council should issue a statement condemning these threats and declaring solidarity with the people of the Great Jamahiriyah.

Brother Salah al-Din Muhammad Karrar also spoke. He is a member of the Sudanese Revolution Command Council and minister of transport, communications, and tourism. At the beginning of his speech he conveyed the greetings of the Sudanese leadership, government, and people to the other delegations, and greeted the international revolutionary leader, Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi, and the people of the Great Jamahiriyah, who are well known for their continued steadfastness in the face of attempts against their sovereignty and their pan-Arab role by the forces of evil and the enemies of the Arab nation. The Sudanese minister said in his speech that the threats against the people of the Great Jamahiriyah in these days constitute another link in the chain of conspiracies being hatched against the Arab nation. He declared that the people and Government of the Sudan stand by the Libyan Arab people against any attempt to harm their freedom and steadfastness.

The transportation minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, Brother Yusuf al-Ahmad, also spoke, saying: We are following with extreme concern—as is the case in the rest of the Arab countries—the threats against the Libyan Arab people. He stressed the need for the Arab transport ministers to condemn and reject these threats.

The minister of transport and communications in the Republic of Iraq, Brother 'Abd-al-Sattar Ahmad al-Ma'ini, and the head of the Economic Department of the State of Palestine, Brother Samir Ghawshah, also spoke. They condemned U.S. threats against the people of the Great Jamahiriyah, and stressed the need to adopt measures rejecting and condemning these threats. The meeting was then adjourned until tomorrow evening, when the conference meets in a final session.

Islamic Affairs

Islamic League Condemns Israeli Muslim Court Raid

LD2411122591 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1028 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Holy Mecca, 24 Nov (SPA)—The General Secretariat of the Islamic World League expressed its denunciation and condemnation of the intrusion of the Israeli forces of occupation in the Jerusalem Islamic court, and the stealing of documents related to Waqf properties [religious endowment fund, inalienable property] and certificates stressing the Arab and Islamic nature of this holy city.

In a statement issued today on behalf of the peoples of the Islamic nation, the League imputed to the government of the Israeli enemy responsibility for this plotted Jewish act, and said that this violation of the Islamic court represents not only a blatant and hostile defiance against the people and sacred things of Palestine, but also a sinful aggression and criminal attack against the properties and documents of the Muslims and their Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the first of the two qiblahs [direction of Muslim prayer] and the third holy place.

The League further said that the Israeli enemy persevered for a long time in changing the characteristic traits of holy Jerusalem for future Judaization, wiping out its Islamic characteristics and Arab traits.

The Islamic World League stresses that the violation of the Islamic court, and the stealing of documents related to the Waqf properties and certificates stressing the Arab and Islamic nature of Jerusalem, is considered one of the proofs pointing to the Israeli enemy's perseverance in

plundering Jerusalem, and to the continuation of aggression against its inhabitants and against the Islamic nation as a whole, contrary to the deceptive logic of Jewish peace.

The Islamic World League urges governments and peoples throughout the Islamic world to act with speed, at all levels, to put an end to the aggressive and criminal acts being carried out by the authorities of occupation in Jerusalem, and elsewhere in occupied Muslim Palestinian cities, in violation of all international laws.

The League asserts the need for the return of documents and certificates seized recently by the Israeli forces from the religious court, and that they refrain from interfering with any Arab and Islamic property belonging to the Arab and Muslim people, throughout the occupied territories.

The Islamic World League permanent secretariat stresses to the entire world that the Jews' aggression against Islamic sanctities and documents will be a lasting witness to and conclusive evidence of the aggressor usurper's not caring for Islamic sanctities and heritage—nor does he attach any importance to international laws and ethics. Moreover, he despises international laws and charters, and bears enmity to other nations' beliefs and religions—particularly the Islamic religion.

Palestinian Affairs

Hanan 'Ashrawi on Peace Talks, PLO Links

TA2311065191 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT (LESHABAT supplement) in Hebrew 22 Nov 91 pp 4, 5

[Interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman for the Palestinian delegation, by Dan Shilon; place and date not given]

[Excerpt] [Shilon] The impression is that you are gradually losing a lot of friends on the Palestinian street.

['Ashrawi] I do not agree. I am a Palestinian, and there is no conflict between this and my meetings with my Israeli friends.

[Shilon] Are you not aware of the contention several Palestinians have raised that you betrayed them?

['Ashrawi] No one accuses me of treason. This is an extreme statement. We do have an opposition, and there are varying degrees of opposition, but most Palestinians clearly support us.

[Shilon] Do you regard yourself as an authentic Palestinian leader?

['Ashrawi] I do not think I am a leader at all.

[Shilon] Why?

['Ashrawi] I was not appointed to lead them. All I do is try to explain the problems and present political plans.

[Shilon] Is this merely volunteer work?

['Ashrawi] Yes.

[Shilon] Did you go to Madrid on your own behalf or did someone send you?

['Ashrawi] No one paid me or is paying me to do the work I do.

[Shilon] But someone evidently elected you to represent the Palestinian cause in the current peace process and the Madrid conference.

['Ashrawi] Of course there is a decisionmaking network here in the territories and outside them. There was an agreement on who will go to Madrid, and there was a division of power among the people who were to go.

[Shilon] Did you or do you continue to receive instructions from Yasir 'Arafat?

['Ashrawi] Do you mean directly?

[Shilon] Directly or indirectly.

['Ashrawi] I will not answer here questions I am not prepared to answer when Israeli interrogators ask me.

[Shilon] It is a key question.

['Ashrawi] Indeed it is, but this does not mean you shall receive an answer to it. I can only say that the Palestinian people are united and it makes no difference whether some of them live under an occupation rule while others live elsewhere.

[Shilon] Where and when did you last meet Yasir 'Arafat?

['Ashrawi] I am not prepared to answer this question either.

[Shilon] Why do you insist so strongly that the PLO is the representative organization of the Palestinian people?

['Ashrawi] Because it is.

[Shilon] The PLO leadership was never elected by the residents of the territories.

['Ashrawi] The PLO leadership was elected by our parliament in exile, which is outside the territories. The PLO carried out very extensive activity to promote the Palestinian cause, and with the years it evolved into a representative organization for all intents and purposes.

[Shilon] This does not alter the fact that the PLO was never elected by the residents of the territories.

['Ashrawi] It is impossible to hold elections under an occupation rule.

[Shilon] Are there matters over which you and Yasir 'Arafat disagree?

['Ashrawi] There are many issues on which I agree and many others over which I disagree with the PLO leadership. This is a democratic organization and we have every right to agree or disagree.

[Shilon] Do you really believe that the PLO is a democratic organization?

['Ashrawi] Yes, but you should remember that in the current situation, in which the Palestinian people live under occupation, it is difficult to observe all the democratic values and operate openly and normally.

[Shilon] In the ongoing process, does Israel currently maintain negotiations with the PLO?

['Ashrawi] Yes, definitely. Everyone knows it. No binding resolutions regarding the peace process can be made without PLO leadership decisions. Only after the PLO gave its consent were we able to launch the current peace process. If someone wants to ignore that and hide the PLO, that is his problem. From our point of view, the PLO is the one to make the decisions and to facilitate the ongoing moves.

[Shilon] Do you even today encourage the intifadah?

['Ashrawi] Of course I do. The problem is that the Israelis interpret it their own way. The intifadah is basically a process of forging a national entity and a new society. It is a very positive process which should be encouraged.

[Shilon] Are you deliberately ignoring the terrorist aspects of the intifadah?

['Ashrawi] I never think about the intifadah in terms of violence or terror.

[Shilon] But this is the real state of affairs. The intifadah hurts innocent Israeli civilians.

['Ashrawi] This is definitely not the case in fact. In my view "terror" means military operations against innocent civilians. If you look at what happens here you will reach clear conclusions as to who applies terror in the territories.

We Palestinians have no military organizations and we conduct no activity against civilians. I agree that here and there we saw from our side also incidents of violence against Israelis. But I do not regard that as terrorism. These are acts of desperation. When people live in intolerable conditions, they react. Violence has never been part of the intifadah's political scheme.

[Shilon] Are you calling today for an end to all types of violence?

['Ashrawi] I personally, and the Palestinian leadership, have never urged violence, so we should not be held responsible for it. That is why we likewise cannot call for an end to it.

[Shilon] You definitely can call for an end to it. You have at least the moral authority to do so.

['Ashrawi] From the moral point of view, naturally we have called and continue to call for a nonviolent intifadah, despite the Israeli provocation and the intolerable conditions under which the inhabitants of the territories live. We view the Israeli occupation as an extreme form of violence against our people, which should stop. Violence has never served the cause of peace.

[Shilon] What was your opinion of Yitzhaq Shamir's speech at the Madrid conference?

['Ashrawi] It was a very limited speech, narrow-minded, which looked to the past instead of to the future. It expressed the mentality of a man enthralled by his own slogans. Instead of opening new horizons, he is busy closing doors.

[Shilon] Do you know another Israeli leader who could have made a better speech, from your point of view?

['Ashrawi] There are many, but I doubt that they could be called leaders. I hope that one day they will be your leaders. Among the Jewish women I met at my house this week, there were many with leadership potential.

[Shilon] Who do you prefer between Shamir and Peres?

['Ashrawi] I will not get into the problems of internal Israeli politics; however, one can say that Peres has at least called for a freeze of settlement activity, and we consider that an advantage over the Likud's positions. There must be better alternatives in Israel than the Likud and Yitzhaq Shamir but that is not for me to decide.

[Shilon] But the Israeli people voted for the Likud and Yitzhaq Shamir. How will that effect the chances of reaching an agreement?

['Ashrawi] It will be very difficult, especially in light of the fact that Yitzhaq Shamir seeks to establish facts on the ground. I think that the positions taken by Yitzhaq Shamir and his government do the Israeli people a grave injustice. From what I know about the Israelis, not everyone thinks like Shamir. There is a large part of the public in Israel, maybe even a majority, that does not accept his views. They are much maligned by being linked to a policy that is actually carried out by the Shamir government.

[Shilon] Do you not believe that Yitzhaq Shamir wants peace?

['Ashrawi] I am doubtful that Shamir wants peace. I have serious doubts about his real intentions. I can only judge by what I see. I know that he and his government are acting against peace. They are building new settlements, provoking the Palestinian people, and using firearms against Palestinians. The activities carried out by the Shamir government constitute more solid and negative proof than any political statement it can make.

[Shilon] And do you Palestinians want peace with Israel?

['Ashrawi] We want peace with Israel on the just basis of equality and partition. When there are two states here, one will be able to talk of cooperation and true peace.

[Shilon] If you succeed in establishing an independent Palestinian state, what will its borders be?

['Ashrawi] The borders will be those of 1967. It is important that the borders be decided now. Israel, unfortunately, is unwilling to do that.

[Shilon] You know that there are Israelis who speak of a solution through territorial compromise. That will also require a territorial compromise from your part. Would you accept that?

['Ashrawi] We have already given up all the territory we can. As far as we are concerned the 1967 borders are the absolute minimum.

[Shilon] Will your state have its own army?

['Ashrawi] I do not think that we are living in a time of military solutions. Military actions have been proven failures and have never resolved problems. They are a waste of resources and energy. The Palestinian state will be too small to invest in an army. It would do better to invest in constructive directions.

[Shilon] I therefore understand that you oppose forming an army if a Palestinian state is established?

['Ashrawi] I am not holding negotiations here. I merely expressed my opinion. The Palestinian people should not squander their resources on destructive goals.

[Shilon] Does your plan call for a redivision of Jerusalem?

['Ashrawi] No. I do not think that we can allow ourselves to redivide Jerusalem in two. This city must have a special status and the two peoples will have to share it.

[Shilon] Will you insist on the right of return to places like Yafo and Ramla?

['Ashrawi] This is a right that must be recognized. We will not negotiate this right, but there is definitely a possibility that we will accept compensation. We will not demand demographic changes that will affect Israel or the Palestinian state, but we will insist on a recognition of the right of return.

[Shilon] What will happen to the settlements in the Palestinian state?

['Ashrawi] The entire concept of the settlements is a very racist idea. When our state is established I do not think that it should house Jewish ghettoes, especially on land that does not belong to them. These lands must be returned to their rightful owners.

[Shilon] In other words you are proposing a "transfer" of Jews from the territories?

['Ashrawi] One cannot compare Palestinians who have been living on their land since before 1948 and Israelis who were taken from their homes to the occupied territories. Nevertheless, we do not intend to carry out any kind of transfer, and we do not subscribe to any form of racist policy. The whole issue must be left for negotiation, and I believe that a solution can be found through peaceful means.

[Shilon] Will you accept the autonomy plan without knowing the basic tenets of the permanent arrangements?

['Ashrawi] We are not discussing autonomy at all. We are talking about a transition period which means moving onward to the next stage. The transition period bears no resemblance whatsoever to the autonomy plan the Israelis talk about. This is a dynamic stage directly leading to the next one, which as far as we are concerned means the establishment of the independent Palestinian state.

[Shilon] Is this a precondition to the current moves?

['Ashrawi] We are not placing preconditions. We say that this is the Palestinian position.

[Shilon] How would you respond to Israelis who describe your philosophy as a sophisticated phased plan to destroy the state of Israel?

['Ashrawi] It is very hard to answer that question because it is based on irrational assumptions and emotions. We have declared and continue to believe in a solution of two states living side by side in peace. If we cannot achieve that, then of course we can always go back to questioning the very legitimacy of the state of Israel. If, however, we attain our goal we can live together in peace and cooperation. That would be the beginning of the a positive future.

[Shilon] Will our generation have to go through more wars in the region?

['Ashrawi] If the current process is not concluded successfully, I definitely believe we can expect another war. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Talks Delegates Mull Washington Venue

'Sharp Exchanges' With U.S. Consul

TA2211194091 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Report by correspondent in the territories Amir Hay]

[Text] Before Yitzhaq Shamir ended his meeting with President Bush, [U.S. Consul in Jerusalem] Molly Williamson and her political section adviser conferred with the representatives of the Palestinian delegation in Hanan 'Ashrawi's Ramallah residence. In the meeting, which lasted nearly three hours far from the camera lenses, sharp exchanges were traded, mainly between

delegate Dr. Sa'ib 'Urayqat and Consul Williamson. The former argued vehemently that the delegation should not agree to the talks in Washington because the United States will not provide the PLO men with visas. Williamson, as she has always done in her meetings with the Palestinians, replied: That is it; it has been decided.

Incidentally, there are rumors among the Palestinians that 'Urayqat will be dropped from the Palestinian delegation in the next round of talks because of what they perceive as unwarranted gimmicks, such as the kafiyeh he wore in Madrid.

Dr. 'Ashrawi approached the press after the meeting:

[Begin recording in English] ['Ashrawi] We discussed extensively the nature of the message from Mr. Baker and we had several questions pertaining to Israeli practices here, several questions pertaining to the implications of holding the negotiations in Washington, and we promised that we would pursue this in writing with the cosponsors.

[Unidentified correspondent] So does that mean that you haven't accepted the invitation to Washington?

['Ashrawi] Now we have to think about that and we have to consider it, and there are certain clarifications that have to be made before we accept or refuse. [end recording]

[Anchor Eli'ezer Ya'ari] Our correspondent adds that a PLO- Palestinian delegation left Amman for Moscow today. Radwan Abu- 'Ayyash, a member of the Palestinians' advisory council, told our correspondent that the delegation intends to ask Moscow to persuade the United States to include the PLO in the political process openly, seeing that the PLO had observed the demand to maintain a lower profile during the Madrid conference.

Delegation Size To Be Cut

TA2411121791 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p A3

[Report by Gay Bekhor and Yosi Torpstein]

[Excerpt] [passage omitted] U.S. Consul in East Jerusalem Molly Williamson arrived at Hanan 'Ashrawi's Ramallah residence two days ago to deliver the official letter of invitation to the bilateral talks in Washington on 4 December. Other members of the Palestinian team for the peace talks were also present, among them Sa'ib 'Urayqat, Nabil Qassis, Ghassan al-Khatib, Zahirah Kamal, and Mamduh al-'Akir.

Speaking to HA'ARETZ yesterday, Sa'ib 'Urayqat said that the Palestinian delegation will be slashed to only between 25 and 30 members, including the 14 delegation members themselves. He claimed that the names of the team members who will depart for Washington will be published in two days. 'Urayqat pointed out that despite the rumors that he would be ousted from the team, this was not mentioned at all. At the same time, he added that advisers who were not in Madrid will be included. The delegates will leave the territories three or four days before 4 December to hold coordination talks with the Jordanians and to arrive in Washington one day before the beginning of the talks.

'Urayqat also reported that two days ago, when he returned from Amman, where he held coordination talks with various Arab elements, a metal detector was used during the body search on him at Allenby Bridge and his briefcase was opened and inspected. "It is inconceivable that a member of the Palestinian delegation, who is about to negotiate with Israel, should be treated like this. I will raise the issue elsewhere, not here," he said.

Mustafa 'Abd-al-Nabi al-Natshah, another member of the Palestinian delegation, told HA'ARETZ yesterday that the Palestinian team has already transmitted to the United States several conditions to be met before Palestinian participation in the Washington talks can be facilitated: providing entry visas to approximately 10 PLO activists from abroad, renewing the U.S.-PLO dialogue, and allowing the Palestinians to express themselves freely in the U.S. media. He claimed that the Palestinian team is currently awaiting the U.S. response to these terms.

Al-Natshah also reported that in the early stages of the talks the Palestinians will raise the issue of stopping settlement activity in the territories. Afterwards they will demand that Israel make goodwill gestures by fulfilling the 25 demands presented by the Palestinian side, via the United States, prior to the Madrid conference. If the Israelis reject the demands out of hand, the Palestinians will request U.S. and USSR intervention. He believes the discussion of the matter will be a lengthy affair, but added that the Palestinians are not interested in causing a crisis in the talks and will consequently demonstrate maximum flexibility to facilitate the success of the talks. [passage omitted]

'Ashrawi on Terms of Acceptance

TA2411120191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Interview with Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokesperson of Palestinian delegation to peace talks, by David Ze'ev; place and date not given—recorded]

[Text] [no opening question as heard] ['Ashrawi] Well, there is no final or definite reply yet, but the position is that there are no objections in principle to Washington D.C. on 4 December. However, we do have certain questions and elucidations which have to be answered before we give a final or definite answer.

Among the issues we have to consider we have the status of the delegation itself; we have Israeli practices in the occupied territories and the whole settlement drive as well; and we do need to discuss the work conditions of the Palestinians in the States.

[Ze'ev] Well, will your delegation continue to be a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, or will it break up?

['Ashrawi] No, according to agreement, it will break up, because there are Palestinians issues that have to be specifically addressed by Palestinians, and Jordanian issues that have to be specifically addressed by Jordanians. But, we do intend to continue close cooperation and coordination.

[Ze'ev] As far as you know, are the talks in Washington to deal with substantive issues, or are we again dealing with logistics, such as a future venue?

['Ashrawi] Well, I think both, but we will not enter into the details of the agenda. There are, of course, different approaches. However, we will deal with specific realities before we enter the agenda discussions.

[Ze'ev] Have you been informed by American officials that Palestinian advisers who are members of the PLO will not be granted entry permits to the United States?

['Ashrawi] No, we haven't been informed that. Of course, we know that the United States will not change its laws and regulations, but we also expect certain flexibility and understanding of Palestinian needs.

[Ze'ev] Is that one of the issues that could affect the positive response?

['Ashrawi] Yes, it is.

U.S. Invitation Under Study

JN2411135891 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Arabic 1107 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Interview With Dr. Hanan 'Ashrawi, spokeswoman of the Palestinian side in the joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation, by Sa'id Mu'addi carried within the "With the Midday Events" feature; date, place not given—recorded]

[Text] [Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, the United States has fixed 4 December as the date for resuming bilateral negotiations in Washington. What is the Palestinian side's position on this?

['Ashrawi] The Palestinian side is still studying this invitation and its dimensions, and discussing the neutrality of the venue. With regard to the timing, there are no problems. As for the venue, however, there are some issues and clarifications that need to be followed. So far we have given no answer. There is a Palestinian approach toward not rejecting, in principle, Washington and 4 December as venue and date for the direct bilateral negotiations. However, some issues need to be clarified. It is clear that the Palestinian side has, since the beginning, worked for the success of this march, and will deal with the issues in a positive manner within the Palestinian rights and constants.

[Mu'addi] A meeting between you and the U.S. consul general was held the day before yesterday. What took place during that meeting?

['Ashrawi] The consul general conveyed to us a letter from Mr. Baker, Secretary Baker, on the venue and date of the upcoming bilateral talks, and on some suggestions regarding the content of these talks, in addition to procedural and technical issues. We also discussed Palestinian requirements to help the Palestinian side make a positive decision. The invitation we received was the same as those handed to all parties and sides. Its content was not different from the rest of the invitations. It is related to the date and venue, and procedural issues.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, do you think that the United States will respond to some of the Palestinian side's conditions for going to Washington?

['Ashrawi] We did not place any preconditions. We only requested answers to some important and principle questions in order for the Palestinian side to make its decision on participation. Therefore, it was first necessary to clarify the issue of Israeli settlement practices and their impact on the Palestinian response, the Palestinian reality, and the march itself. This is part of the issues we discussed. We also discussed procedural issues. The United States can, as we have been informed, be flexible with regard to some of our requests.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, it is known that differences have emerged between Jordan and Syria with regard to Jordan's acceptance to attend the bilateral negotiations. Does this affect the PLO's relations with Syria?

['Ashrawi] I do not know what you mean by differences. There are differences in viewpoint, but not on the substantial issues. Some issues need to be followed up and require coordination. The Palestinian decision always remains independent, and based on internal and international considerations. What is required now is a Palestinian role to overcome the difficulties and obstacles.

[Mu'addi] What progress has been made on the idea of establishing committees for political action in the territories after Dr. Sari Nusaybah's return from Washington?

['Ashrawi] Dr. Sari Nusaybah explained some of the problems and issues. There is serious action to press ahead, through positive and constructive means, toward building these committees.

[Mu'addi] Have you received information from Moscow on the meeting between Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze and Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and Faysal al-Husayni?

['Ashrawi] We received information from the Palestinian team—the Palestinian side. The meeting was very positive. There is understanding on the Soviet Union's role and effective participation, on a Palestinian request for a more direct and effective contribution by the Soviet

Union as one of the cosponsors, as well as on some political issues related to the current Palestinian-Soviet relations.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, a last question. The 4 December has been fixed for resuming bilateral negotiations, what about changes that could take place to the members of the negotiating Palestinian side?

['Ashrawi] These issues are still under discussion. A decision in this regard will be made on the highest levels. Some needs and issues must be resolved based on the requirements of this phase. For example, there is no need for a big and expanded delegation because these talks do not include big open inauguration sessions or conferences. There is need to appoint some members with specific qualifications to this team.

[Mu'addi] Dr. Hanan, thank you very much.

['Ashrawi] You are welcome.

'Initial' Acceptance Anticipated

JN2511130991 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1210 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Basim Abu-Sumayyah dispatch from the occupied territory]

[Excerpt] The Palestinian side is expected to present this evening its response to the U.S. invitation to participate in the second round of the bilateral talks to be held in Washington on 4 December. According to a Palestinian source, the response contains initial acceptance to participate in the talks. The Palestinian side, however, will not announce final acceptance before receiving U.S. clarifications on a number of issues such as granting PLO officials entry visas to the United States, the status of the negotiating delegation, and the circumstances of its work.

The Palestinian source added that the members of the negotiating Palestinian delegation will present the response to U.S. Consul Molly Williamson during a meeting to be held at Faysal al-Husayni's residence in Jerusalem this evening.

Ghassan al-Khatib, member of the negotiating Palestinian delegation, has said that an air of dissatisfaction prevails the delegation members vis-a-vis the U.S. dealing on a number of issues, such as U.S. pressure to embark on direct Israeli-Palestinian contacts before the resumption of the negotiations, U.S. retreat from proposals that were previously presented with regard to facilitating the work and movement of the Palestinian delegation, and U.S. bias toward Israeli understanding of the topics to be discussed in the coming session of the negotiations. This is contrary to previous promises that the United States would remain a neutral and effective factor in the negotiations.

Al-Khatib added that the Palestinian response also contains a protest, because Israel continued to escalate settlement measures and confiscate the occupied territory. [passage omitted]

Abu-Sharif: Washington 'Excellent Choice'

JN2411065091 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0530 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] The Palestinian side in the Jordanian-Palestinian joint delegation will participate in the second round of the peace negotiations due to be held in Washington early December.

In an interview with the Radio Mediterranean International, Mr. Bassam Abu-Sharif, an adviser to the Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, said that the choice of Washington as a venue to the next round of peace negotiations is an excellent choice. Mr. Abu-Sharif added that he hopes that all parties will enjoy the same and equal rights in entering and touring the United States. He also expressed hope that Washington will soon resume dialogue with the PLO because that will be logical and compatible with peace efforts being exerted by United States to bring about a peaceful settlement in the Middle East.

PLO 'Readiness' To Attend

LD2411102491 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] The PLO has expressed its readiness to attend the bilateral negotiations between Arabs and Israel when the date and venue of the next round of these negotiations has been officially established, and Washington has addressed invitations to the parties directly concerned in the Arab-Israeli conflict to attend this round in Washington on 4 December. Sources close to the PLO report that the Palestinian leadership does not have any objection to the U.S. invitation. However, it considers that its final agreement depends on the facilities that the United States are to give to the Palestinian delegation—especially the obtainment of entry visas and freedom of movement, like the rest of the delegations, in addition to the resumption of negotiations between the PLO and the United States.

Bassam Abu-Sharif, Yasir 'Arafat's adviser, said in an interview to the Mediterranean Radio [as heard] that the Palestinians will go to Washington with the same readiness they showed in Madrid. With regard to the choice of Washington, Bassam Abu-Sharif said that this choice is very good. He also expressed hope that Washington would very soon resume dialogue with the PLO. He said that it is logical and natural that the United States resume their relations with the PLO following the resumption of Soviet relations with Israel.

Abu-Sharif, 'Abd-al-Shafi on Talks

LD2411200691 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Excerpt] The United States sent out an invitation to the Palestinians, before the Israelis, to go to Washington, venue of the bilateral negotiations. Israel had felt that this matter might become the first American humiliation for a natural ally. However, the Palestinians accepted this with satisfaction. Abdelkader Hirch reports::

[Hirch] Bassam Abu-Sharif, adviser to President 'Arafat said today that the PLO accepts 4 December and Washington as the date and venue for the resumption of the peace conference. He added that the Palestinian delegation will negotiate with the same mentality it had when it negotiated in Madrid. Abu-Sharif expressed his hope that Washington will treat all the parties equally and resume the dialogue with the PLO.

For his part, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation, who is currently in Moscow in the company of Faysal al- Husayni, said, after his meeting with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, that he hoped that his delegation will get all the facilities concerning entry visas, freedom of movement and contact, and diplomatic immunity. [passage omitted]

Abu-Sharif on Dialogue With U.S.

LD2511075891 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] Bassam Abu-Sharif, the adviser of President Yasir 'Arafat, has stated that the second round of bilateral talks, which will be held in Washington on 4 December, will be a round of talks on essence coming after the Madrid general session of the peace conference which was held to give the various parties the opportunity to state their positions in general terms.

He said: We seek the implementation of international legitimacy and the initiative of President George Bush on the ground that it provides the minimum rights the Palestinians should possess for peace to prevail.

In an exclusive statement to the Tunisian newspaper AL-BAYAN, published today, Bassam Sharif said that the question of the implementation of UN Resolutions 242 and 338 and President Bush's initiative will be raised. In return, he said, negotiations can then begin with all the sides on all outstanding regional issues.

He added that now that the United States has proposed Washington as a venue for the negotiations, it would be only logical for the U.S. Administration to deal with all the parties to the bilateral negotiations on equal footing.

Bassam Abu-Sharif said that he expects that the United States will restore its relations with the PLO, and that that would take place in the near future, adding that since the round will begin within 10 days, then the United States will have to provide the necessary facilities to the Palestinian delegation just as it will do to the other delegations. It is hoped that this will take place as soon as possible.

AFP—Palestinians Agree to Talks in U.S.

NC2411190191 Paris AFP in English 1753 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Amman, Nov 24 (AFP) - The Palestinian delegation to Middle East peace talks has agreed to take part in bilateral negotiations with Israel in Washington beginning December 4, delegation leader Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi said here Sunday.

'Abd-al-Shafi, returning from Moscow, told AFP that he would consult with Jordanian negotiators before leaving for Washington around December 1.

The Palestinians are taking part in the U.S. and Soviet-sponsored peace conference as part of a joint Jordanian team.

They held one round of talks with Israel in Madrid on November 3 following an opening plenary session of the conference on October 30.

Amid disagreement on where the talks would resume, the United States on Friday proposed Washington as the venue.

The U.S. proposals were also sent to Jordan, Israel, Syria and Lebanon, with a State Department communique on Friday announcing Jordan's immediate acceptance.

Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, on Sunday, said he had urged President George Bush to reconsider Washington as the venue for the talks.

Shamir, who had just returned from Washington, wants the talks held in either the Middle East or Cyprus.

Israeli officials and commentators were clearly irked by the U.S. announcement Friday, which came just hours before Shamir was to meet U.S. President George Bush.

"Never has an Israeli prime minister been so humiliated by the United States," fumed the daily newspaper Haaretz on Sunday.

Arab leaders in Madrid had rejected Israeli demands for the bilateral talks to take place in the Middle East, alternating between Israel and the appropriate Arab capital.

Arab and Palestinian negotiators, unwilling to travel to Israel and thereby accord it full recognition, had lobbied for what they described as neutral ground.

U.S. officials on Friday said a third, multilateral phase to the peace talks could be held next month, with persistent but unconfirmed reports speaking of Moscow as the negotiating venue.

But Syria has warned it will not attend multilateral talks—expected to focus on regional economic and disarmament issues—until Israel in the bilateral phase commits itself to withdrawing from occupied Arab land.

5 Palestinians Granted U.S. Entry Visas

TA2511123091 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 25 Nov 91 p 1

[Text] AL-MANAR has learned that the U.S. Administration has decided to give five Palestinian officials entry visas to the United States so that they can be close to the Palestinian negotiating delegation, which will arrive in Washington on 1 December. According to informed sources, some advisers to the Palestinian president who hold U.S. citizenship will also be present in the American capital. As to the five persons who have obtained entry visas, two deal with the situation in the occupied territories and are considered to be among Yasir 'Arafat's advisers.

AL-MANAR: U.S.-PLO Dialogue To Resume 15 Dec

TA2511120991 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 25 Nov 91 p 1

[Text] AL-MANAR has learned that the dialogue between the United States and the PLO will be resumed in the Egyptian capital on 15 December and that Dr. Nabil Sha'th will head the Palestinian side, which will include four persons: Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, PLO Executive Committee member; Sa'id Kamal, the Palestinian ambassador in Cairo; and two advisers, including a member of the occupied homeland affairs department. As to the American delegation, it will be headed by Robert Pelletreau, the U.S. ambassador in Cairo, and two U.S. State Department officials.

AL-MANAR confirms that Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat recently received an official message from the U.S. Administration, delivered by Dennis Ross, director of the State Department's policy planning staff, to Nabil Sha'th, 'Arafat's political adviser. Palestinian sources say that contacts are under way for holding a meeting between 'Arafat and U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in a European capital.

'Abd-al-Shafi Comments Prior To Talks in Moscow

Nothing in Territories 'Irreversible'

JN2311080791 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 23 Nov 91 p 2

[By Maryam Shahin]

[Text] Amman—Jewish settlements and other "facts on the ground" created by Israel in the occupied Arab territories should not be considered as permanent fixtures because they are "illegal," the head of the Palestinian delegation to the Arab-Israel peace talks said before leaving to Moscow.

"Nothing that has been established on the ground in Palestine is irreversible because everything that has been established has been established by force and is thus illegal," Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi said a few hours before leaving Amman for talks with Soviet Foreign Ministry officials there.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi, along with other Palestinian peace delegates and senior Palestinian officials, were to discuss the Soviet role in enabling the peace process to succeed on the basis of a peace for land formula with newly reappointed Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi praised Mr. Shevardnadze for his "strong" leadership qualities that he showed while serving as foreign minister during his previous term in that post.

The Palestinian delegation, representing Palestinian communities in the occupied territories and in the diaspora, were invited to Moscow prior to the switch in the post of foreign minister.

The Palestinian officials would also discuss the Palestinian position and bilateral issues with the Soviets. "We will take this opportunity to relay our position directly to the Soviet officials," Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi told the JORDAN TIMES.

"Eduard Shervardnadze has demonstrated in the past that he is a very able politician and we hope he will be an asset to the success of the peace process which his country has co-sponsored," Mr. 'Abd- al-Shafi added.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi, a physician and head of the Medical Association in Gaza, said the success of the peace process depended on Israel's attitude.

"We must wait and see if there will be a breakthrough in the negotiations," he said. "We have yet to see if Israel is willing to withdraw from the occupied territories and give peace a chance."

"I think basically the only thing that would change the Israeli attitude is American economic pressure. This would be the most effective type of pressure. They (Israel) are badly in need of financial aid," Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said.

"A worsening economic situation in Israel will in turn create pressure on the Israeli goverment from within. It will have a domino effect," Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said.

Some members of the Israeli political establishment, even some members of the Likud party, support a two-state solution, according to Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi. These included the mayor of Tel Aviv and former minister Ezer Weizman, he added.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said he believed that the Palestinian delegation's performance in Madrid had a positive effect on the "rank and file" in Israel and this is bound to show up sooner or later in the polls. Over 50 per cent of Israelis

are against the continued presence of Israeli troops in the West Bank and Gaza, Dr. 'Abd-al- Shafi said.

A change in opinion in Israel would not necessarily oust Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir from power in the next elections, he said.

"There will be pressure on him (Mr. Shamir) during the next elections if Israel will be isolated during the next round of talks but they (Israelis) will still support a likud government," Dr. 'Abd- al-Shafi explained." Because Shamir can impose changes on Israeli society and ask people to make concessions which are not very popular, and because of the nature of his character he has the clout to do that."

Asked if he preferred Mr. Shamir over Labour Party leader Shim'on Peres Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said. "I prefer if Shamir stays, because I know what he thinks and I know he has the strength to carry out a decision and to stick with it." Mr. Peres, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said, was not as strong a leader as Mr. Shamir.

Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said that his native Gaza would need major financial help to rebuild it's infrastructure which had been neglected for decades. A substantial part of the $76 million European Community grant to the West Bank and Gaza would go to rebuild health and educational as well as industrial infrastructure in Gaza, Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi said.

The European Community grant is substantially higher than the one provided by the community to the Palestinians under occupation in 1990. The 1990 figure was some $12 million. Israel on the other hand received $203 million in loans with preferential interest rates from the community.

A new infrastructure would have [to] be built to deal with an eventual influx of peoples to the territories if the refugee question was dealt with in the framework of U.N. Resolution 194.

Asked if he thought the U.N. resolution of 1949, which calls for a return of the refugees to the areas they fled in 1947-48 or compensation, would be implemented he said if Israel is planning to bring in three million more Jews "then why not bring back the refugees that want to come back."

Moscow Talks 'Good, Encouraging'

JN2411193891 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] The Palestinian delegation to the peace talks, led by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, returned to Amman from Moscow today, after holding talks with the Soviet leadership on the peace process and the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks set to resume in Washington on 4 December.

Speaking to our political affairs correspondent, Dr. 'Abd-al- Shafi termed the Palestinian team's talks with Soviet officials good and encouraging.

[Begin recording] ['Abd-al-Shafi] We set out our views on the basics of this stage in detail, and the potential difficulties that may hamper the process, especially Israel's stubbornness on the settlement issue. This is in addition to other things that we hear the Israelis repeat. In actual fact, Mr. Shevardnadze is conversant with all aspects of the problem. He impressed us as a strong personality. I dare say the Soviet position is in keeping with international legitimacy. From our perspective the meeting was good and reassuring insofar as the Soviet position is concerned.

[Correspondent] Dr. 'Abd-al-Shafi: Palestinian sources have asserted that they have no objection to Washington as venue for continuing the talks. These sources, have, however, asserted that there are facilities, or that they want facilities and assurances. What do you say about these facilities and assurances?

['Abd-al-Shafi] Naturally, we do not want anything special. We only want to be accorded the same treatment as the other delegations. As is known to everyone, there are, in addition to the negotiating team, advisers and our political points of reference, and the like. These must be close to us. These are the kind of facilities we want. As I have said, we are not asking for privileged treatment. We are asking that we be accorded the same treatment as other delegations.

[Correspondent] What has been the U.S. response?

['Abd-al-Shafi] The U.S. response has been that they do not want this to be a condition for our consent. I feel, though, that they will accommodate the Palestinian request. I believe the Soviets will press in this direction—accommodating Palestinian demands.

[Correspondent] Doctor: Before 4 December, the date for the start of negotiations in Washington, will there be any Arab coordination, among the principal parties involved?

['Abd-al-Shafi] We will press for Palestinian-Jordanian-Syrian-Lebanese coordination in all stages.

[Correspondent] Thank you, doctor.

['Abd-al-Shafi] Thank you. [end recording]

At the end of his visit to the Soviet Union, during which he met with Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze, the head of the Palestinian team to the peace talks, Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, announced that the Palestinian delegation will take part in the Washington peace talks in accordance with the American invitation to the Palestinian side. 'Abd-al-Shafi said the Palestinians will continue to propel the Middle East peace process forward, and that the Palestinian side will do all it can to sustain the momentum of the talks in the interests of a fair peace in the region.

Shevardnadze Pledges To Limit Emigration

JN2511095091 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 25 Nov 91 pp 1, 16

[By Tawfiq al-'Abid]

[Text] Sami al-Kilani, member of the Palestinian negotiating delegation, which returned from Moscow, said the delegation has received Soviet promises that it would take measures to limit Jewish emigration to Israel including efforts to ensure that Jews in the Soviet Union enjoy freedom of language and religion.

He told AL-DUSTUR that Soviet Foreign Minister Shevardnadze told the delegation that the other new changes and measures relating to the economy, ownership, housing, and installations would greatly reduce emigration and encourage those who have already emigrated to return home after discovering the Israeli fallacy.

He added: The Soviet minister shares the Palestinian concern regarding the dangers of immigration and settlement in the occupied territories, especially since immigration is one of the most important sources for settlements, and because its application as a personal liberty is at the expense of the Palestinian individual's right to live on his land, and constantly threatens the confiscation of more land. Therefore, a way should be found to link the application of this right and at the same time guarantee the rights of the Palestinian people.

On the issues raised by the delegation, headed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and including Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, al-Kilani said that they asked that immigrants who discover the deception and wish to return home be allowed to do so. The Soviet minister stressed that the immigrants keep their nationality for a specific period, hence their return is possible.

He pointed out that the Israeli Government has told the Soviet officials that there is no policy to direct immigrants to the settlements in the occupied territories, but the delegation said that the declared Israeli policy is being daily violated by the practical implementation of a host of incentives and privileges that are given to immigrants who settle in the occupied territories.

Al-Kilani said the Palestinian delegation has asked the Soviet Union to play an effective role in dealing with the question of settlements, specially since there is an international consensus that the settlements constitute an obstacle to peace. The Soviet foreign minister promised to play an effective role in that direction.

He went on to say: The Soviet Union has promised to conduct intensive contacts with the United States and with the other European countries to receive more Soviet immigrants and to use its capabilities in this field. He pointed out that Soviet officials have repeatedly indicated to the Israeli Government that housing the immigrants in the occupied territories is a violation of the Geneva Convention.

Responding to a question, al-Kilani said: We asked the Soviet Union, as a sponsor of the peace conference, to contact the Americans in order to provide the required facilities to the Palestinian negotiating team and its committees, such as travel visas for the required advisers of our brothers in Jerusalem and outside the occupied territories, and regarding the resumption of dialogue with the PLO, which played a basic and important role in the success of the political process. It also demanded a balanced position by the United States in its relations with the Palestinian and Israeli sides similar to that of the Soviet Union when it restored diplomatic relations with Israel days before the start of the peace process.

The Palestinian delegation also demanded that the Soviet representative and the diplomatic mission in Israel play their role alongside the U.S. Embassy and work out arrangements in Jerusalem to facilitate the action of the Palestinian delegation by establishing a link between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. He said: We reject any direct contact with the Israeli Government in the occupied territories because of our situation as a people under occupation, which deprives us of equity as two parties in the negotiations.

Regarding his impression of the delegation's talks with the Soviet foreign minister, al-Kilani said that he sensed seriousness and understanding for the issues presented by the Palestinian side and that the Soviet official used clear language at the dialogue and stressed the continuity and development of relations with the PLO. He informed the Palestinian delegation of the U.S. Administration's willingness to reach a solution through a message he received two days ago from his U.S. counterpart.

As for the multilateral conference, al-Kilani said: There are identical viewpoints between the Palestinian and Soviet sides on this conference and, so far, the only ambiguity is concerning its details. The Soviet minister asked to be acquainted with the Palestinian view on this conference so that it can be considered when the Soviet Union works out its concept in this respect.

He said: The Palestinian delegation has clarified the importance of linking the convening of multilateral talks with the realization of substantial progress in the bilateral negotiations.

Al-Kilani and Dr. Samir 'Abdallah are due to return to the occupied territories today. They will return to Amman two days later to travel to Washington to participate in the bilateral negotiations which are due to be held there.

'Arafat—Autonomy Only for Interim Period

LD2311194891 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] The brother President and leader Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] expressed his belief that the peace process will not be easy, and it might require engaging in several

battles during the interim stage before arriving at the independent Palestinian state. The brother president Abu-'Ammar explained in a speech he made at a meeting of the PLO cadres that the next 10-month period will be one of the most difficult periods and requires continuous work. It is because it will be the period of bilateral negotiations with the Israeli delegation. He affirmed his rejection of the autonomy principle, except as an interim period under the supervision of international forces.

On the Madrid conference, Brother President Abu-'Ammar noted the tangible presence of the PLO at every corner of the conference. He stressed that the Palestinian delegation had realized what was expected of it and it was formed from inside and outside [the occupied territories] and Jerusalem despite Soviet and U.S. pressures concerning some aspects.

Brother Abu-'Ammar announced that slight changes will occur to the Palestinian formation that will take part in the second stage of the peace conference. Brother Abu-'Ammar said that Jordanian King Husayn gave important facilities to the joint Palestinian-Jordanian delegation during its journey to Madrid and that Jordan had included among its members three who originally come from Jerusalem at a time when Jerusalem was not allowed to participate. He said that Israel fears peace most, a peace that is based on Palestinians obtaining their legitimate rights.

UNLI Urges UN Supervision of Territories

LD2411173991 Tunis Tunisian Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] The Unified Command of the Intifadah [UNLI] called today for stopping the settlement policy and placing the occupied territories under international supervision. Call No. 80 pointed out that the priority of restoring [Palestinian] national rights and establishing the independent state is embedded in stopping the settlement policy and stopping the building of settlements and placing the occupied territories under the interim supervision of the United Nations together with the evacuation of the occupation forces.

The statement called on the United Nations, as it is about to start the annual discussions of the Palestinian issue, to adopt resolutions that would work toward the implementation of international legitimacy concerning the Palestinian issue, especially resolution No. 194 which specified giving the sons of the Palestinian people, who were forced to leave their land in 1948, the right to return to their homes.

Attorney Seeking PLO Consent for Gaza City Council

TA2411201591 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p A1

[Report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin]

[Excerpts] Attorney Fayiz Abu-Rahmah is expected to depart for Egypt tomorrow to obtain PLO permission for the establishment of a Gaza municipal council. Palestinian sources in the Gaza Strip have reported that Abu-Rahmah, who is slated to head the city council, decided to leave for Cairo to iron out the differences between the various organizations in the Gaza Strip and the PLO regarding the signing of the agreement on their participation in the city council.

The sources explained that the plan to establish the council has been put on ice until after Abu-Rahmah's return. During his talks with PLO people in Cairo, Abu-Rahmah will take action to obtain from that organization written approval for the establishment of the council. He will thus attempt to refute the contentions of senior Palestinian activists that he had not obtained PLO license to head the city council. According to those activists, all of Abu-Rahmah's activities related to the municipal council stem from his dismay at the fact that he was not in the Madrid conference delegation.

Over the weekend members of several Gaza Strip organizations, led by the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, took action against the establishment of the council. The opponents painted hostile graffiti on the front gate of Attorney Abu-Rahmah's house. In one of them he was warned that his fate will be similar to that of Za'far al-Masri, the late Nabulus mayor who was assassinated in 1987. [passage omitted]

Defense establishment sources confirmed that differences of opinion indeed emerged among the various organizations, and that it was consequently decided to delay the establishment of the city council for the moment. The sources emphasized that the defense establishment has granted its approval for the council, so that the ball is currently in the court of the various organizations in the Gaza Strip. Security sources last night expressed the fear that extremist elements might want to harm Abu-Rahmah because of his consent to head the city council.

[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 24 November, in a report by Sulayman al-Shafa'i on page 4, adds that "last week Yasir 'Arafat telephoned Attorney Fayiz Abu-Rahmah" and "encouraged him to face up to his opponents: 'Go ahead with your endeavors and set up the city council as you see fit. We are behind you.'"]

Killer of Palestinian Leaders Executed at Sea

JN2311083791 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 0800 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] A responsible Palestinian source has revealed to the newspaper AL-HAYAH, published in London, that the killer of the three Palestinian leaders Salah Khalaf, Hayil 'Abd-al-Hamid, and Muhammad al-'Umari, was executed a few days ago. The source said that the execution took place in international waters, and not on any Arab territory, in light of Arab and international

pressure that called for not executing the man charged with the assassination, who was named Hamzah 'Abdallah Abu-Zayd.

'Arafat Hails Saddam, Denounces Blockade

JN2311183391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1718 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Tunis, 23 Nov (INA)—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat has hailed President Saddam Husayn and the Iraqi people for their heroic confrontation of the imperialist Zionist onslaught against the Arab nation.

In a statement to an INA correspondent in Tunis today, Yasir 'Arafat said that the heroic Iraqi people under the leadership of President Saddam Husayn are able to confront the fateful challenges, regardless of their extent.

He affirmed that strengthening the Iraqi people's confidence in and adherence to their wise leadership is the most important factor for confronting the challenge against Iraq.

The Palestinian president said that the unjust economic blockade imposed on the Iraqi people has exceeded all humanitarian and ethical limits—a fact which necessitates the immediate termination of that blockade to provide food and medicine for Iraq's children.

He called on the Arab nation to carry out its national, pan-Arab, and human duty to end the painful economic blockade.

President Yasir 'Arafat also said that the blockade affects not only the Iraqi people. The Palestinian people in the occupied territories, he said, are also suffering and that steadfast Gaza is facing real starvation, as admitted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, and that the West Bank is also suffering from a suffocating economic tragedy. Despite these circumstances, he added, the brave popular intifadah is continuing.

He pointed out that attempts against the properties of Arabs and Muslims, the latest of which is the confiscation of the documents of the Islamic Court in Jerusalem by the Zionists, are part of plans against Iraq under the cover of international law. This, he said, is unacceptable to any one, especially when the issue is subject to international norms, charters, and resolutions.

The Palestinian president added that Iraq alone confronted the aggression and the resulting dangerous battles and paid a high price with its heroes' blood. This is the same price paid by the Palestinian people, he said.

He explained that 431,000 Palestinians have been expelled from Kuwait and have lost about $12 billion as a result of physical liquidation, killing, and raping of Palestinian girls and women by the Kuwaiti authorities.

Egypt

'Dead End' on Mediation To Avert Attack on Libya

NC2311085291 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 19 Nov 91 pp 1, 9

[Mahmud Bakri report]

[Excerpts] High-level political sources have told AL-SHA'B that the United States and Britain have agreed on a joint action plan to commit aggression against Libya. This plan is based on the following principal points:

First, Britain will send an official memorandum to Libya demanding it hand over the two Libyans accused of bombing the Pan Am plane over Lockerbie, Scotland in December 1988.

Should Libya refuse to hand them over, Britain will submit an official memorandum to the UN Security Council demanding Libya be condemned politically and recommending firm punitive measures against the Libyan Government.

A suitable time then will be set for joint U.S.-British military action against Libya, in which other international parties might participate.

The sources added that British Prime Minister John Major told President George Bush during their contacts in the past few hours that Britain agrees to letting its territories and bases be used as direct military departure points for attacking Libyan territories and noted that British aircraft will take part in all the stages of preparations, planning, and execution of this operation. [passage omitted]

While the United States and its allies continue their arrangements for imposing comprehensive sanctions on Libya in preparation for military aggression against it, there have been intensive contacts during the past few days between Cairo and Tripoli on the possible political and military developments in light of the U.S. threat against Libya. During these contacts, Libya stressed the need for Arab solidarity and for creating a joint Arab stand to confront any joint U.S.-European threat to any Arab country. Libya also stressed the need for the Arabs to prove to the entire world the unity of their stands and fate and their insistence on justice. Libya asked Egypt to hold the necessary international and regional contacts to explain the Libyan viewpoint, which is based on the following:

1. If there is common U.S.-European insistence on knowing the full facts without any falsification, then the issue should be submitted to a neutral international committee. The implementation of this committee's recommendations should be the equal responsibility of Libya and the other concerned countries. Libya expressed its complete readiness to implement all the decisions that could be issued by this neutral international committee.

2. Egypt endeavors to convey the Libyan documents and records which show that Libya is not involved in the (terrorist) plans for the 1989 French plane incident and the American one in 1988.

3. Libya stresses respect for the UN principles that call for protection of the territorial sovereignty of every country and for non-aggression against the territories or citizens of other countries.

The Egyptian Government started, beginning last Friday, the necessary contacts with the international powers to avoid a new military confrontation in the region, particularly after Libya expressed its willingness to take all possible and necessary measures to defend its territories against any military aggression.

Reports indicate that the Egyptian mediation between Libya and the British Government has reached a dead end because Britain has refused to respond to the Egyptian demand not to embark on any military and economic measures against Libya and to tackle this issue within a cordial framework that would ensure the rights of all parties.

U.S. Request To Close Border Denied

JN2411172791 Paris Radio Monte Carlo in Arabic 1708 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Mustafa Bakri dispatch from Cairo]

[Excerpt] I have learned from informed Egyptian sources that Cairo has recently rejected a U.S. request to close the border between Egypt and the Libyan Jamahiriyah. The sources confirmed that the U.S. Administration held a diplomatic contact with the Egyptian Government in which it expressed concern over the improvement of relations between Egypt and Libya. The U.S. Administration also asked Egypt to reconsider its policy of opening its frontier to a state that the U.S. calls terrorist.

Washington said that in order to put things right, Cairo must quickly close its border with Libya and freeze the cooperation agreements between the two parties in all fields. Washington also asked Egypt to abide by international resolutions that may be used to impose political and economic sanctions against Libya. [passage omitted]

Musa: Egypt Holding Contacts on Bilateral Talks

NC2311144291 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1345 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has stated that Egypt supports the approach to convene the bilateral Arab-Israeli talks as soon as possible to give impetus to the peace process.

In a statement today, Musa said that the continuation of the peace process in the Middle East enhances the possibility of reaching a comprehensive peaceful settlement that will take into consideration the rights of all

parties and uphold the principle of land for peace, a basic principle in the bilateral talks and the phases that will follow.

Musa explained that Egypt will closely follow up the bilateral talks and will put its experience at the disposal of all parties, adding that it is now holding contacts in this respect.

Musa Meets PLO's Sha'th, Delivers Message

NC2311151691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1350 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa today met with Dr. Nabil Sha'th, political adviser to Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat, and handed him a message from President Husni Mubarak for 'Arafat.

Sha'th said his meeting with 'Amr Musa was part of the Palestinian-Egyptian consultations to push forward the peace process in the Middle East. He said that Musa reaffirmed Egypt's support for halting settlement-building in the occupied Arab territories, including Jerusalem, adding that Egypt is paying great attention to this matter.

Sha'th said that Egypt will play a fundamental role in the upcoming bilateral Arab-Israeli talks, although it will not participate in them. He said: We consider Egypt a full partner. It supports the Palestinian cause and rights.

Sha'th explained that halting settlement-building will be top on the list of topics to be discussed during the upcoming phase of bilateral talks in Washington and during the multilateral talks that will follow two weeks later. He added that halting settlement-building will be proof of good intentions to continue the peace process, since it is difficult to discuss peace while the Palestinian people's land is being violated and usurped. He also stressed that applying the Fourth Geneva Convention pertaining to the rights of civilians under occupation to the inhabitants of the occupied territories will facilitate the peace process.

The meeting between Musa and Sha'th was attended by Palestinian Ambassador to Egypt Said Kamal.

Minister on 'Conflicting' Israeli Statements

NC2411150691 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1436 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—Commenting on the conflicting Israeli statements on the Middle East, Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that Egypt welcomes the statements that help and contribute to the peace process and to clearing the atmosphere, especially statements that note the need to prevent nuclear proliferation and to place the settlements and land-for-peace issues on the negotiating table.

In statements he made today, the foreign minister said that at the same time, Egypt regrets statements that impede and place obstacles before the peace process. He stressed that Egypt is closely following developments in the Horn of Africa on the principle that security and stability in that region are linked to Egyptian security.

Mubarak, al-Asad Discuss Mideast Peace Process

NC2411151991 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] President Husni Mubarak telephoned Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad this afternoon. The two presidents discussed some of the current developments and the Middle East peace process.

Mubarak Says No Changes to Current Government

NC2511101791 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0743 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 25 Nov (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak affirms that there will be no changes in the current government now. He added that Prime Minister Dr. 'Atif Sidqi is doing his job thoroughly and efficiently and is successfully implementing the economic reform process to Egypt's current and future benefit.

In an exclusive statement to the weekly newspaper MAYU published today, President Mubarak said this year is the most difficult year of reforms, then gradually things will get easier.

President Mubarak noted that the fact that the new UN secretary general is Egyptian shows Egypt's prestige and influence worldwide. He added that he had spoken to world leaders, including U.S. President Bush, French President Francois Mitterrand, Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev, and the leaders of China and Britain about the nomination of Dr. Butrus Ghali to the UN secretary general's position and their response was clear.

President Mubarak stressed that were it not for Egypt's strong position, things would have been much different, adding that the world is standing beside us because of our position and international reputation. The president pointed out that Egypt's activity abroad is always for the good of its citizens at home.

Talks Open With Saudi Chief of Staff

NC2411091191 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] This morning Defense Minister General Muhammad Husayn Tantawi received Staff General Muhammad Bin-Salih al-Hammad, chief of staff of the Saudi Armed Forces. The Saudi guest arrived in Cairo yesterday on a five-day visit.

The two sides held a military session of talks at the Defense Ministry today. The meeting was chaired on the Egyptian side by Lieutenant General Salah al-Halabi, chief of staff of the Armed Forces and on the Saudi side

by Staff Gen. Muhammad Bin-Salih al-Hammad. The talks dealt with how to strengthen military cooperation between the two countries.

Pan-Arab Security Discussed

NC2411112891 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0954 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Excerpt] Cairo, 24 Nov (MENA)—Defense Minister General Muhammad Husayn Tantawi today received Staff General Muhammad Bin-Salih al-Hammad, chief of staff of the Saudi Armed Forces. After the meeting, a session of military talks began between the Egyptian and Saudi delegations. Egyptian Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Salah al-Halabi heads the Egyptian delegation and Bin-Salih al-Hammad heads his nation's delegation.

At the outset of the meeting, Lt. Gen. al-Halabi stressed that the military talks are important because they stem from our realization that our pan-Arab security is one indivisible whole and that the requirements of the defense of the Arab nation and its sanctities are the same. He said that the common understanding that governs the relationship between the two leaderships and fraternal peoples enhances this realization. Al-Halabi the close and firm ties between President Husni Mubarak and the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz, and he noted that Egyptian-Saudi relations are good and fraternal. During the Gulf crisis, he said, Egyptian blood mixed with Saudi blood on the holy land, proving to the world that through their cooperation, Egypt and Saudi Arabia can ward off any dangers surrounding our Arab nation.

Lt. Gen. al-Halabi stressed that the talks today will provide an opportunity to exchange views to serve our common interests and achieve our nation's most precious goals of safeguarding its pan-Arab security. [passage omitted]

Islamic Groups, Security Forces Clash 18 Nov

NC2211114591 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 20 Nov 91 pp 1, 8

[Report by Fikriyah Ahmad]

[Text] Islamic groups and security forces clashed in Abu Tij village in Asyut after midnight two days ago. Well over 60 members of the groups attacked the Baqur police post using guns and homemade bombs in a bid to storm the post and release the groups' leader in Baqur, 'Ali 'Abd-al-Zahir. Colonel Ra'uf Ibrahim Suwaylim, deputy director of the post; soldier Hamdan Mahmud 'Abd-al-Hakim, and soldier Husam Rajab 'Abd-al-'Aziz were injured during the attack. They were transported to Asyut Hospital for treatment.

The post force requested urgent reinforcement with troops and vehicles to hunt down the Islamic groups' members and 22 of them were captured as a result. Security troops are intensifying their efforts to arrest the rest of the members. Police surrounded the village of Baqur and the outskirts of the post and conducted a search for the other members.

Police and security troops seized large quantities of weapons, ammunition, and Molotov cocktails. The troops, commanded by Asyut Security Director Major General Nabil 'Ibadah, identified the remaining members of the Islamic groups. Maj. Gen. 'Isam Najm, deputy director of the Public Security Directorate, arrived in Asyut to follow up on the matter. Maj. Gen. Hilmi al-Faqi, assistant interior minister, called for adopting security measures immediately to surround and arrest the other members to avoid any exacerbation of the situation.

The security forces last week arrested the Islamic groups' leader.

Kuwaiti Sentenced to Life for Drug Smuggling

NC2311184091 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1730 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Cairo, 23 Nov (MENA)—A Cairo criminal court today sentenced Shaykh Talal al-Sabah, a Kuwaiti national, to life imprisonment and hard labor and fined him half a million Egyptian pounds. It also sentenced his Syrian colleague 'Abduh Na'im to six years imprisonment and fined him 50,000 pounds.

The public prosecutor referred the two defendants to court in April on charges of smuggling 750 grams of heroin into the country to sell and for their own personal use.

Libya

Foreign Bureau Receives U.S. Lockerbie Charges

LD2311153591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1440 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Nov (JANA)—The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liasion and International Cooperation has issued a statement which says:

On 21 November 1991 the Belgian ambassador to the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriyah, whose government is the caretaker of U.S. interests in the Great Jamahiriyah, delivered to the director of consular affairs at the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation a document written in English which contains charges issued by the U.S. attorney general in the District of Columbia against two Libyan citizens in connection with the crash of a Pan Am aircraft over Lockerbie, Scotland in 1988.

The People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation has studied these documents, which appear to be of a legal nature, and decided to refer them to the General People's Committee for Justice for consideration and evaluation in terms of form and subject, to study and analyze

them, after having them translated, and to deal with them in accordance with the provisions of criminal procedure and penal laws in Libya.

The People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation will convey the response of the General People's Committee for Justice to the ambassador of the Belgian Kingdom.

Al-Bishari Comments on Accusations

LD2211190591 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1400 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Tripoli, 22 Nov (JANA)—London [BBC] radio yesterday evening interviewed Brother Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, who discussed the U.S. and British allegations regarding the Pan-Am flight which crashed on British territory in 1988.

In his reply to a question concerning what they describe as irrefutable evidence of the Great Jamahiriyah's involvement in the crash of the Pan-Am airliner, Brother Ibrahim al-Bishari said: We have seen what they have termed as irrefutable evidence and it has become clear to us that such evidence is meaningless. We accept judicial argument about this issue and accept legal dialogue. We are totally confident that our citizens are innocent. If the question is a legal question, then we agree to discuss it. But if there are political motives, then the question becomes something entirely different.

As for the handing over of our citizens, there is no state in this world which hands over its citizens to another state. He pointed out that the Great Jamahiriyah applies Libyan law and that the Secretariat of Justice and the secretary of the General People's Committee for Justice have set up a judicial committee chaired by a high court judge to examine and verify these accusations. We have also asked the families of the victims and all those who have an interest in the matter to submit evidence which proves the involvement of any Libyan citizen in this matter.

Replying to a question which asserted that within the present system in Libya there may not be a way to control [zabit] these matters, and that consequently there are some who doubt the fairness of the judiciary, Brother Ibrahim al-Bishari, secretary of the People's Committee for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation, said that the Libyan judiciary is honest; in fact it is one the most honest judicial systems in the world. It is totally independent. We accept the participation of international lawyers in this investigation; we accept international supervision over this investigation. We call on the states which sustained any damages to participate with us in clarifying the facts because it is in our own interest to clarify the facts.

As for the suggestion made by some parties to set up an international tribunal to try the two persons, Brother Ibrahim al- Bishari said: We accept any honest international judiciary because we are totally confident that our citizens are innocent. He added that the General People's Secretariat for Justice has invited all those who have an interest or anyone who sustained damages to follow up this investigation with us, and the Libyan judge will open his office to receive any contributions in this regard.

In answer to a question about the connection between the release of hostages [in Lebanon] and the accusations against the Great Jamahiriyah, Brother Ibrahim al-Bishari said: We were very pleased with the release of the Western hostages because we believe that they are innocent people whose freedom should not be restricted. Here I would like to mention that the leader of the revolution [Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi] personally addressed several calls for the release of these hostages and that these calls were answered on various occasions. Here I would like to point out that he personally made such calls in the interest of Terry Waite on account of the fact that the latter is a friend of our country. We were very pleased to see his freedom restored to him. But what we fear is that Libya may have become the victim of a secret deal for the release of the hostages.

In reply to a question about the Great Jamahiriyah's expectations concerning the Arab League at this stage, Brother Ibrahim al-Bishari said: As a member of the Arab family and of the Arab League, it is within our right to resort to this organization to explain our views regarding these threats and provocations by the United States and the British Government against the security, safety, and sovereignty of our country and people, and to ask that the Arab countries be in solidarity with us. This is something which the charter and the joint Arab defense agreement stipulate. Also, it is our right to outline our views to our Arab brothers, particularly because we are totally convinced that this old but new U.S. campaign has specific and clear political aims that are unrelated to this regrettable incident —the crash of the American Pan-Am airliner—which we condemned as Libya condemns any act of terrorism against the safety of civilians, and we reject such a practice. But we believe that the United States wants us to comply in entering the so-called new world order.

Foreign Liaison Bureau Summons EC Envoys

LD2211204391 Tripoli Libyan Television Network in Arabic 1930 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] The People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation this evening summoned the ambassadors of the EC countries and explained to them the Great Jamahiriyah's standpoint and observations on the latest developments in the campaign of accusations to which it has been subjected in connection with the U.S. Pan Am aircraft incident.

Airline Denies Employee Involvement

LD2311152191 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 1415 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Nov (JANA)—The Libyan Arab Airlines company today issued a statement on claims and accusations which have repeatedly been made by information organs against one of its employees concerning his involvement in the incident of the crash of the U.S. Pan Am aircraft over Lockerbie in Britain in 1988.

The Libyan Arab Airlines company denounced in its statement such claims and accusations, describing them as a defamation of its reputation and affirming that the employee concerned, al-Amin Khalifah Fuhaymah, who has been one its employees for a long time, is well known to all international airlines and has nothing to do with politics or with intelligence services.

Libyan Airlines furthermore pointed out in its statement that al- Amin Khalifah Fuhaymah gave up his job and severed any links with the office of the Libyan Arab Airlines company in Malta after 30 September 1988.

The statement added that Libyan Arab Airlines reserves the right to initiate legal proceedings against those who are trying to tarnish and discredit its reputation. At the same time, it demands, however, that such false claims against the aforementioned employee be investigated by a Libyan Arab court, a court from the Arab Maghreb Union, or an Arab court.

People's Congress Members Meet Iraqi Delegation

LD2311141191 Tripoli JANA in Arabic 0910 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Tripoli, 23 Nov (JANA)—A meeting was held yesterday evening at the People's Hall in Tripoli between some members of the General People's Congress and a delegation from the Iraqi National Assembly, which is "in these days paying a visit to the Great Jamahiriyah, during which it has been agreed to exchange visits between the popular organizations in the Great Jamahiriyah and Iraq in the consolidation of brotherly relations between the sons of the one Arab people."

The Iraqi delegation expressed during the meeting the solidarity of the Iraqi people, who are standing on the side of the brother Libyan Arab people in confronting any attempts to harm its sovereignty.

Sudan

'Heavy' Fighting Closes Juba Airport; 17 Killed

AB2411200091 London BBC World Service in English 1710 GMT 24 Nov 91

[From the "African News" program]

[Text] Reports from Sudan say that heavy fighting has been taking place for several days around the southern regional capital Juba with rebels of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, SPLA, shelling parts of the government-held town. The reports say at least 17 people in Juba have been killed and that town's airport has been closed.

A BBC correspondent in Cairo says the fighting appears to be related to an attempt by government troops to break out of Juba and then adds that earlier reports suggesting the shelling was prelude to an SPLA invasion of Juba are unlikely to true.

Islamic Front Leader on Fundamentalist Activities

PM2111100491 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Nov 91 pp 1, 4

[Telephone interview with Dr. Hasan 'Abdallah al-Turabi, secretary general of the National Islamic Front, by correspondent Mu'awiyah Yasin in London; date not given]

[Text] [Yasin] Egyptian officials accuse you of being behind the coolness in relations between Cairo and Khartoum. What is your opinion?

[Al-Turabi] I see no benefit in quarreling.

[Yasin] But the charges leveled at your present role in Sudan are creating much controversy.

[Al-Turabi] Others have decided to pursue a policy of attacking me. This is the second time that I have been exposed to an official Egyptian attack, but I have decided to avoid such quarrels.

[Yasin] What is your true position on Egypt?

[Al-Turabi] My position is known to those who follow my activities and statements. My links with the Egyptian Government and people are strong. This is because I do not belong to a particular front and because my true bonds with the Egyptians in my public and private lives are strong and positive. My ideas extend beyond the issues of narrow regional conflicts. In fact, I always call for a transcending of the regional borders imposed by imperialism. They are not in our interest, nor are they part of Islamic traditions and values.

[Yasin] What is your true role in the present regime in Sudan?

[Al-Turabi] I have no role in managing the regime, but when necessary I do play a general intellectual role.

[Yasin] The Sudanese and several Arab and Western capitals talk about your role in training extremist fundamentalist elements. How do you justify that?

[Al-Turabi] I am not a trainer, nor have do I have any public post for which accusations can be leveled at me. Sudan is an open country and the people can see and hear all its activities being carried out. We hear these stories from outside Sudan. Even foreign diplomats in Khartoum know that they are delusions and part of the

general campaign against the Islamic phenomenon, because it is new, and new things tend to cause concern, and perhaps alarm, to the old. But generally, this campaign has nothing to do with reality.

[Yasin] Officials in Tunisia and Algeria directly accuse you of supporting the extremist groups which stir up unrest in the two countries....

[Al-Turabi] We have not heard anything in that regard directly from officials of either of the two countries. I would like to say that the Islamic phenomenon is a general phenomenon and that there is no conspiracy behind it. The entire world, including the Soviet Union, is witnessing an Islamic awakening. And if anyone supports it, it is Almighty God.

[Yasin] But your political party and government maintain strong relations with Iranian and Afghan mojahedin groups. Is this not sufficient to justify the accusations leveled at you?

[Al-Turabi] True, we have relations with all the prominent personalities of the Islamic awakening in the world, and this is natural because we are one nation and should follow the straight path of God. The reasons for the awakening exist everywhere, and this is not an infection that can be transmitted or exported.

[Yasin] What is your present position in Sudan?

[Al-Turabi] I am secretary general of the Arab and Islamic Popular Conference.

[Yasin] That organization is accused of acting as an umbrella for extremist groups. It is also said that you established it as an alternative to the Muslim Brotherhood's international organization. What is your opinion?

[Al-Turabi] The conference is not a gathering for extremist Islamic movements; it is a gathering for Islamic tendencies throughout the world. Or let us say that it is a gathering for all the Islamic world's intellectuals. It comprises nationalist and patriotic tendencies, especially Arab ones. The conference expresses the spirit of popular unanimity which has emerged in recent years over the Muslims' awakening.

[Yasin] But you actually participated in the Sudanese regime with your ministers and youths who run the ministers' offices, and with your slogans too. How can you deny that?

[Al-Turabi] We represent the Islamic tendency, which is a tendency not bound by a single party or name. It has continued to expand and develop, taking various forms, some of which are represented by social entities bearing other names. The general tendency of the present regime in Sudan is nationalistic, and it also accommodates other tendencies. It cannot be monopolized by a particular tendency. I told you that I have no influential role in the regime, but I am active on the international scene and enjoy within the country the same freedom that leaders of the former parties enjoy.

[Yasin] You travel abroad, whereas Ummah Party leader al-Sadiq al-Mahdi cannot leave the towns of the "triangular capital," so what freedom do you mean?

[Al-Turabi] Al-Mahdi receives representatives of the foreign press, makes statements, and performs his public duties. And so do Muhammad Ibrahim Nugud (secretary general of the Sudanese Communist Party) and a number of other party leaders. In fact, some of them write in the newspapers and criticize the regime's policies. But I prefer to be active on the external scene, so I have found an unchallenged forum for expression.

[Yasin] Reports say that your attack on Colonel Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi forced him not to receive Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir during his recent visit to Tripoli. How true is that?

[Al-Turabi] What I know is that al-Qadhdhafi was confined to bed and Lt. Gen. al-Bashir visited and talked to him. What was said in that regard is a cheap attempt to cause a split, and our concerns extend well beyond that. I am preparing to visit the brothers in Libya within a week.

[Yasin] And how do you see a solution to the problem of southern Sudan?

[Al-Turabi] My positions are known. They are not tactical, political positions but rather totally strategic. The solution to the problem does not depend on (Colonel John) Garang. Regardless of what is happening now, conditions in the South will be resolved, God willing. As for the dispute within the "Sudanese People's Liberation Movement," it cannot be attributed to a disagreement between Lam Akol and Garang. It stems from the structure of the people in southern Sudan, especially since the gap between positions emerged among southern leaders following the fall of the former Ethiopian regime. It is much deeper than merely something organized by the Sudanese regime.

UN Envoy Aga Khan Continues Official Visit

UK's Richter To Be Freed

JN2311171391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1625 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Nov (INA)—Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, representative of the UN secretary general for humanitarian affairs, announced that Iraq agreed to release British prisoner Ian Richter. Richter was held in prison in Iraq on bribery charges.

The UN envoy spoke today at a news conference held at the al-Rashid Hotel, which was attended by correspondents of foreign newspapers and news agencies and an INA correspondent. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan said the Iraqi Government's decision came after appeals from His Majesty King Husayn of Jordan and himself, and is viewed as a good will initiative, expressing the great courage of the Iraqi Government.

The British Government decided to unfreeze 70 million pounds, part of frozen Iraqi funds in Britain, to enable Iraq to purchase medicine and food for the Iraqi people in a good will gesture.

He explained that he received assurances from the British Government that the difficulties facing Iraqi students in Britain would be overcome by unfreezing their assets that are deposited in the Jordanian Embassy in Britain.

The international official hoped that this decision would give new momentum to efforts to meet the Iraqi people's humanitarian needs and will help unfreeze Iraqi funds in other countries.

He added that he would leave Baghdad for London with the British prisoner Ian Richter. He also promised to hold a news conference at 1200 tomorrow to explain the results of his meetings with Iraqi officials over the past two days, pointing out that he made great progress during those meetings.

Ian Richter then said he was pleased by the Iraqi Government's decision to free him and also by his government's decision to unfreeze part of Iraqi funds to meet the Iraqi people's needs.

Renews Memo on UN Relief Aid

JN2411153891 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1300 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Nov (INA)—A memorandum of understanding, previously concluded between Iraq and the UN humanitarian relief program, was renewed at the Foreign Ministry today, thus allowing it to remain in force until 30 June.

The renewal of the memorandum, which was due to expire at the end of December, was signed on the Iraqi side by Foreign Minister Ahmad Husayn. For the world body, the renewal was signed by Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, personal envoy of the UN secretary general for humanitarian aid.

Muhmmad Sa'id al-Sahhaf, minister of state for foreign affairs, and members of the UN envoy's delegation attended the signing ceremony.

Ends Visit, Departs 24 Nov

JN2411153491 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1303 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 24 Nov (INA)—Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, personal envoy of the UN secretary general, and his delegation left Baghdad today at the conclusion of a six-day visit to Iraq.

The UN envoy held talks with officials on the effect of the unfair blockade imposed on Iraq during the visit. Furthermore, he signed an agreement renewing the memorandum of understanding previously concluded between Iraq and the world body.

Guard Attempts al-Majid Assassination, Fails

NC2211171191 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1607 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Iraqi War Minister 'Ali Hasan al-Majid was the target of an assassination attempt carried out by 'Ammar Labib Ziyad, according to an exclusive report received by the Voice of the People of Kurdistan. Ziyad, a 29-year-old Shiite born in Tikrit, has been a member of 'Ali Hasan al-Majid's personal guard for three years. He was killed by al-Majid following the unsuccesful attempt. Members of Ziyad's family were detained by security services in Karkuk. Authorities are searching for others who may have been behind this attempt.

Al-Majid Awarded New Rank, Graduate Degree

JN2311092691 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Nov 91

[Text] A celebration was held today at the Staff College to award Defense Minister Lieutenant General 'Ali Hasan al-Majid a masters degree in military science and the title of "Staff." The celebration was attended by Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi; Comrades Mizban Khadr Hadi and Kamil Yasin Rashid, members of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party Regional Command; comrade members of the Ba'th Party Military Bureau; members of the Armed Forces General Command; and the Army chief of staff and his assistants.

The celebration began with a reading of verses from the Koran and Surat al-Fatihah [the opening chapter in the Koran] for the souls of the martyrs, the most glorious of all people. The dean of the Staff College delivered a speech in which he hailed the noble care which Staff Field Marshal Saddam Husayn, commander in chief of the Armed Forces, gives to the college to reinforce our valiant Army with

qualified staff officers to defend Iraq's precious soil and build an ideological army to face the threats against its security and sovereignty.

[Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic on 23 November on page 13 publishes an 80-word report, datelined Baghdad-agencies, saying that Iraqi media on 22 November reported that Lt. Gen. al-Majid was promoted to the rank of general, in a celebration held at the Staff College on Thursday, 21 November.]

Minister Rebuts U.S. Claims on Food Shortages

JN2311212391 Baghdad INA in Arabic 2038 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Amman, 23 Nov (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih has refuted recent claims by the U.S. Administration, disseminated through the U.S. media, that the Iraqi Government is responsible for the agony of the Iraqi people because it has been refusing to accept the humiliating Resolution 706. Also refuted was the claim that the Iraqi Government distributes its stock of foodstuffs to certain groups of citizens as it pleases.

He told INA that the U.S. Administration and its ally, world Zionism, have been imposing an economic blockade on Iraq for 16 months in the ugliest human crime in the history of mankind, with a view to annihilating all the Iraqi people. They are insisting on and continuing this economic blockade as a tool of political pressure and blackmail meant to violate Iraq's sovereignty and prevent the country from exercising its legitimate rights to its money and resources, which Iraq needs to secure the essential needs of its people.

He added that at the beginning of October, the Iraqis managed to conclude several contracts to purchase food and medicine and 5,363,503 tonnes of the following items: Infant milk, grain, flour, vegetable oil, rice, sugar, tea, red and white meat, chicken, eggs, and other food supplies worth $39.772 billion dollars in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Security Council Resolution 687 and the letter of the chief of the Economic Embargo Committee, which allowed countries to unfreeze Iraqi assets for the purchase of food and medicine.

He added that the criminal U.S. Administration—which has not refrained from killing children, women, and the elderly; burying Iraqi soldiers alive; and destroying infant milk factories and food stores—has not unfrozen our assets in its banks and has not given the green light to other countries to allow Iraq to implement these contracts. As a consequence, this increased the suffering of the Iraqi people and led to an increase in the mortality rate of children under five. The mortality rate increased to 400 percent in October compared with the first month of the unjust blockade, and 335 percent for children over five for that period. This could have been prevented had the U.S. Administration adhered to Resolution 687 and allowed Iraq to purchase food and medicine.

He indicated that the U.S. Administration has gone too far in its aggressive approach to the people of Iraq. When it found that one of the countries had complied with Paragraph 20 of the UN Securitry Council resolution, and allowed for some of the food and medicine contracts to be covered with Iraqi funds, frozen in its banks, the U.S. Administration hastened to pass the iniquitous Resolution 706 whereby all the Iraqi people have been turned into refugees and hostages held by the U.S. Administration—a resolution that has sought to rob the Iraqis of their freedom, sovereignty, and independence.

He made it clear that the demeaning fashion in which the decision was made, its inhumane content, the measures related to its provisions, and the novel commerical and banking methods invented by the U.S. Administration's experts, have no precedence in U.S. or any other nation's dealings. They are based on the epithet attached to the resolution, namely that it was stillborn. The way the resolution was formulated and passed provides conclusive evidence that it was not intended to ease the suffering of the people; if anything, it was meant to entrench the blockade.

His excellency the trade minister stressed that the U.S. Administration thus exposes its aggressiveness and flagrant violation of all traditions and norms of international dealings. It is also acting in violation of international conventions, most of all the UN Charter and the international declaration on human rights.

His excellency the minister said that by playing this racist role against proud Iraq, the U.S. Administrartion will not stop at resorting to falsehoods and twisting of facts to absolve itself from responsibility for the economic blockade it has imposed on Iraq. Its recent claim that the food stocks in Iraq have been distributed to cerain individuals according to whim shows the Iraqis, and all those who live in Iraq and those who have visited it after the economic blockade, the evil intentions and the aggressive line of the U.S. Administration. The Iraqi people know for a fact, through its own and UN sources, that all Iraqi citizens and Arabs and foreigners receive their share under the ration card system on a monthly basis without discrimination, based on the humanitarian approach of His Excellency President Saddam Husayn and his excellency's instructions that all the food available to the state be made accessible to all Iraqis and residents of the country equally, irrespective of nationality, profession, or location.

The minister concluded his statement by saying: Iraq appeals to all good and honest forces in the countries where Iraq has frozen funds in their banks in the range of $4 billion—especially the United States, Britain, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Bahrain, and other nations—to put pressure on their governments to release Iraq's frozen funds so that it may make its purchases of food and medicines in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution 687 and the letter of the Economic Sanctions Committee president that sanctioned Iraq to use the money to buy food and medicines.

BABIL Readers Awaiting Daily's Republication

JN2211154591 Baghdad AL-JUMHURIYAH in Arabic 20 Nov 91 p 3

["Letters to the Editor" column: "A BABIL Lover Whispers Words of Love Through AL-JUMHURIYAH"]

[Text] Mail from readers has brought to us a letter from a loving reader who loves the newspaper BABIL. He chose to use AL-JUMHURIYAH as a rostrum to communicate his love to his sweetheart. In his letter, he says: Why has the publication of BABIL, the hope, been halted? I am sorry because I have had to address the newspaper BABIL through AL-JUMHURIYAH. The sudden halt in BABIL's publication took us by surprise. The name of the paper BABIL [Babylon] connotes civilization. From this civilization, we have continued to derive our inspiration. This civilization has continued to be the source of our celebrations, jubilation, and trilling cries of joy. Babylonian civilization provides our credentials to the world, since it is the civilization of the past and the present in which we take pride.

BABIL came and opened its doors to us after the doors of many other papers had been closed to us and after other newspapers had been reluctant to publish our writings. Before the papers, many of us had within ourselves internal policemen preventing us from writing; fear also was present.

But when BABIL came onto the market, the bans imposed on us were lifted, freedom was restored to us, and letters poured into the paper. Consequently, we had the chance to read many of the articles it published and fear was brushed aside, people were reassured, and wounds were healed. Is it then fair to stop pens from writing after BABIL opened the doors of happiness for them?

BABIL, return to us so that we can typeset again, using pure words denoting joy and sadness, words of complaint, and scoops, as well as the words of the beloved leader which are tinged with the scent of civilization.

BABIL, here we are, your lovers, urging you to launch frank dialogues with thinkers, ministers, and officials. We have very strong hopes that BABIL will be republished as soon as possible so that pens can keep writing. To err is human, and errors prompt us to correct ourselves and our course. Likewise, remedial action is needed, since this will help us to renew our lives. I am awaiting the republication of BABIL every day.

[Signed] 'Isam Husayn al-Hadithi, 12 November 1991

AL-RAFIDAYN Weekly Resumes Publication

JN2411093291

[Editorial Report] Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic on 24 November publishes on page 20 the following AFP Baghdad-datelined item: "The AL-RAFIDAYN weekly, whose editor in chief is 'Uday Saddam Husayn, the son of the Iraqi president, resumed publication in Baghdad yesterday after a two-week suspension.

"However, the newspaper BABIL, whose board of directors is chaired by 'Uday Saddam Husayn, was not distributed to newsstands in the Iraqi capital.

"BABIL, which started publication in April 1991, suspended publication at the same time as AL-RAFIDAYN. The two papers attributed this to high publication costs, especially regarding paper prices."

Saddam Husayn Visits Interior Ministry 23 Nov

JN2311103791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1018 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Nov (INA)—President Saddam Husayn today visited the Interior Ministry where he met with Interior Minister Watban Ibrahim al-Hasan.

The meeting was attended by Staff Major General Muhammad Najm-al- Din al-Naqshabandi, under secretary of the Interior Ministry; and Major General Yunus Sulayman Hasan, police director general.

The president was hospitably welcomed and seen off by the minister and the ministry's senior officers and personnel.

Council of Ministers Discusses Reconstruction

JN2311144291 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1412 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 23 Nov (INA)—The Council of Ministers held an ordinary session today under Prime Minister Muhammad Hamzah al-Zubaydi.

The council discussed a number of issues, including the Ministry of Industry and Minerals' activity and initiatives in the field of reconstruction. The council highly valued achievements during the third quarter of this year.

The council also studied the draft law on exploiting and protecting marine life and recommended that it be studied with the Iraqi fishermen's society in light of the remarks made by the ministers during the council's session.

The council also reviewed the explanation given by the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction about the design of the border complex in Tirbil, which will be the western gate of new Iraq and which is expected to be finished in three months.

Kurdish Towns Bombed; Civilians Ordered To Leave

LD2211142391 Tehran IRNA in English 1136 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] London, Nov. 22, IRNA—Iraqi civilians living in key agricultural and oil zones in Kurdistan have been ordered to vacate their homes or face immediate attacks from government forces.

The latest Patriotic Union of Kurdistan press release issued to IRNA Thursday anticipates that the threat will carried out as part of a recently intensified series of attacks.

Sartik, Qarah Salim, and Shiwa Sur, are just three towns to have been bombed by Iraqi helicopters in the last four days. At 3.30 pm Wednesday, the list of Kurdish civilian casualties grew higher still when helicopters bombed Kifri.

Trade Minister Returns From G-77 Meeting

JN2511101791 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0956 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Excerpt] Baghdad, 25 Nov (INA)—Trade Minister Dr. Muhammad Mahdi Salih returned to Baghdad today after heading the Iraqi delegation to the UNCTAD [UN Conference on Trade and Development] Group-77 meetings that were held in Tehran between 16 and 23 November. [passage omitted]

Oil Minister Leaves for OPEC Vienna Meeting

JN2211165591 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1215 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Nov (INA)—Oil Minister Usamah 'Abd-al- Razzaq al-Hiti left for Vienna today to attend OPEC's 90th ministerial meeting, which is scheduled to begin on Tuesday [26 November].

In a statement to INA, the minister said that the meeting will study the OPEC Secretariat's report and the Board of Governors' report. The participants will also study the report of the ministerial committee charged with monitoring the market and assessing the production ceiling of OPEC member states with regard to the possibility of achieving OPEC's target price of $21 a barrel as the minimum price for the OPEC basket of oils.

The minister noted that the oil market will see an increased demand for oil in view of the stumbling production in the North Sea, the continued concern about the future of the Soviet oil industry and exports, and the drop in temperature in Western Europe to unprecedented levels since late October.

When INA asked him about reports that certain OPEC members are raising their production ceiling, the minister replied: Raising the production ceiling, or even maintaining the same level, may lead to a sharp drop in prices by the time winter ends in February 1992. It will not be an easy task to bring the production ceiling down to defend prices in view of the fact that Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, in agreement with the United States, are determined not to drop their output. This will keep the price for the OPEC basket of oils below $21 a barrel.

The minister concluded his statement by saying: We have prepared all of our production and operations installations. We also plan to modernize them and achieve a high output once marketing begins again when the unfair embargo imposed on Iraq is lifted.

He stressed that Iraq has notified the ministerial council that it has the right to increase its quota to make up for what it has lost.

UN Team, Iran Blamed for Continued Hostilities

NC2211161291 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio in Persian 0650 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Station commentary]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] Arrogant Western forces have striven to break the strong bonds among the various nations involved in the holy war. These forces are trying to dismember their unity and strong mutual links in an effort to shatter their national pride and impose Western hegemony.

Regarding the unholy objectives of Western arrogance, we should mention their so-called crusades and the savage and bloody onslaught the Iranian people recently witnessed in the form of the traitorous and sinful aggression in which all the forces of Western arrogance participated against the steadfast Iraqi combatants.

Dear brothers and sisters. We all must be vigilant in facing the cunning deceit prevalent all over the world and we must focus our attention on it. It is a source of immense regret that the people of the world, the oppressed people of the world, are caught in this trap of treachery and craftiness. [passage omitted]

What we are witnessing today is the result of the provocative actions and venom-spewing of the upper echelons of your country, Iran, which are not prepared to close their old dossier of differences with Iraq. This is the same trap of deceit Iranian rulers have knowingly fallen into. What confirms this fact is that the so-called team of UN experts led by Abdirahim Abbi Farah has gone to Iran for the so-called assessment of the losses Iran sustained during the Iran-Iraq conflict to fan the sentiments of malice between Iran and Iraq.

These so-called experts are a part of the clique of world arrogance and they are the informers who have been nurtured within the nefarious apparatus of world arrogance and have learned the ways of treachery and deceit and creating rifts in the very souls of people to destroy them. They use their vast experience in these ways to snuff out every ray of hope in people's hearts and they allow them no freedom from the shackles and fetters of chronic vendettas, so that these people cannot mend the deep fissures arrogant powers have created in past eras of retrogression.

O vigilant people of Iran, neighboring brothers and sisters, o zealots! Rest assured that the team that has assumed the name of the United Nations is a band of wily fraudulent reporters and their sole focus of attention is to create barriers among people—barriers replete with hostility, malice, and spite. [passage omitted]

Decision on U.S. Invitation 'May Be Postponed'

TA2511054091 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] The decision to respond favorably to the U.S. invitation to continue the talks in Washington may be postponed until the weekly cabinet session on Sunday [1 December]. This was reported by our political correspondent, Arye Golan.

Political sources in Jerusalem said that Israel will accept the invitation, but its agreement will be accompanied by three reservations: Opposition to holding simultaneous meetings with the three Arab delegations, so as to avoid the impression of a conference; a demand that the meeting in Washington deal with procedural issues only; and a request for a U.S. Administration assurance that the talks will move quickly to our region.

Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will hold consultations with ministers and senior officials on this matter today. Foreign Minister David Levi has canceled a planned appearance before an Israel Bonds convention in Paris, deciding to remain in Israel.

Prime Minister Shamir Comments on U.S. Visit

Talks 'Disappointing'

TA2311200491 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will return tomorrow evening after his U.S. tour. Mr. Shamir decided to come back early following what he saw as disappointing conversations with Secretary of State Baker and then with President Bush. The United States invited the participants of the Madrid conference to pursue the talks in Washington in a week and a half. It is in fact imposing a location and time it does not want on Jerusalem. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports:

The Israeli prime minister was accorded a gruff, if not harsher, welcome by U.S. Administration leaders, no matter how you try to present the facts. As he left the meeting with Secretary Baker, he announced that no agreement had yet been reached on the venue for the peace talks, but behind his back the Americans had already dispatched official invitations to all the parties, including Jerusalem. The invitations—phrased in curt, businesslike language—say, among other things, that the representatives of the sides, at the official level, are invited to Washington on 4 December. The invitations say you will be responsible for expenses, but we will provide transportation if you announce your arrival in advance. Please respond by Monday, two days from now.

Shamir's party got wind of this development from Jerusalem, and, Mr. Shamir went for a tough meeting with President Bush, knowing he was about to be faced with dictates. He again heard about Washington, and again suggested Cyprus. The president refused to promise that even after Washington he would impose Cyprus.

Shamir had also originally wanted to discuss again the request for immigrant absorption loan guarantees, which had been deferred. The issue, however, was not even raised.

Even if the prime minister does not take this as a personal offense, his entourage feels: This is the limit; it is necessary to put an end to one-sided demands on Israel in the negotiations. The question is whether Israel can presently afford to say no to the administration on such a matter. Yet it is now time for decisions.

The projected scenario is that in two days, after his return, and on the day the Americans expect to receive an answer, the prime minister will summon a ministerial team—possibly even the entire cabinet. He may recommend turning down the invitation as it is, or perhaps accepting it, though with some conditions. Meanwhile, behind-the-scenes contacts, meanwhile, will continue. The situation this evening, however one looks at it, is very problematic for the Israeli Government.

'Humiliating' U.S. Attitude

TA2211193 91 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 22 Nov 91

[By Ya'ir Stern from Washington—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Stern] The prime minister left Washington this evening under gray skies and in rather gloomy spirits. The Department of State rushed to issue invitations to the Israeli and Arab Foreign Ministries for a meeting in Washington on 4 December, as he prepared for his meeting with President Bush. Speaking to the cameras, Mr. Shamir said that nothing about the talks had been decided:

[Shamir] We later discussed all the issues related to the next phases of the process. Various arguments were broached in this context. Ultimately, we did not reach a final decision, the assumption being that the matter will still be discussed.

[Stern] In a background talk to the Israeli press at Andrews Air Force Base, Shamir said that the Americans have every right to issue invitations, even if this step was taken prior to his meeting with Bush. Shamir said he does not take this as a personal offense. Mr. Shamir claimed this was not done behind his back, and he refused to say whether he expressed his dismay to the United States.

Already last night, during his meeting with Secretary of State James Baker, the two seemed tense when the issue of the invitations was raised. [passage omitted]

The prime minister replied to some questions at Andrews Air Force Base:

Mr. Shamir, you said that the issue of the loan guarantees was not raised at the meeting. Was it your initiative not to raise it?

[Shamir] No, it was simply a case of insufficient time. We sat with the president in a very limited forum and discussed

the issues I mentioned just now. I intended to raise other issues, including the one you mentioned, but there was simply not enough time to raise them. I hope other opportunities will arise during which those subjects can be discussed.

[Stern] After Madrid and the meeting in Washington today, do you now feel that relations of trust have been formed between yourself and President Bush?

[Shamir] I think relations are pretty good.

[Stern] One more question on events in Israel: Are you prepared to react to the resolutions adopted yesterday by the Labor Party on territorial compromise?

[Shamir] I regret all those resolutions. I can only find comfort in my hope that they will not become relevant.

[Stern] Mr. Shamir, one more question: Can you comment on the election of Butrus Ghali as UN secretary general? Will it change Israel's status?

[Shamir] Israel's standing in the United Nations, as everyone knows, is not brilliant, and this election merely underscores it.

[Stern] It seems that the invitations to the talks in Washington strengthened the prime minister's urge to return home and consult with his ministers. [passage omitted]

[Anchor Eli'ezer Ya'ari] The political echelon in Jerusalem reacted with surprise and embarrassment today once it got word that Secretary of State Baker had issued the official invitations to the next stage of the deliberations in Washington immediately after his meeting with Prime Minister Shamir last night. This reaction came after Mr. Shamir himself said at the end of that meeting that the issue had not yet been concluded. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik points out that the invitation was delivered by the U.S. ambassador to Foreign Minister David Levi. It said that the official talks will resume in Washington on 4 December.

Minister Yuval Ne'eman told our correspondent that in view of the humiliating U.S. attitude toward the prime minister, the U.S. ambassador should join the Israeli Government meetings regularly, so he could transmit his instructions and save the Israeli Government embarrassment.

Holds News Conference Upon Return

TA2411175191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1642 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Statement and news conference by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir at Ben-Gurion Airport on his return from the United States—live]

[Text] Ladies and gentlemen: We left on 14 November for a visit to the United States, primarily to accomplish two missions—to address the General Assembly of Jewish Federations, which is a central annual event for U.S. and Canadian Jewry; and to solicit investments in the Israeli economy in order to create places of work to aid with immigrant absorption and to increase economic growth. A distinguished delegation from the Industrialists Association, headed by Chairman Dov Lautman, also went there for that purpose. The event organized by the North American federations served as an enormous demonstration of Jewish unity and solidarity with Israel on immigrant absorption and the continuation of the peace process.

In my remarks, I thanked the Jewish leadership for their exceptional efforts to win approval of the immigrant loan guarantees, and I called on them to double their efforts to strengthen Jewish identity and Jewish education, their support for Israel, and the efforts for peace and security.

I addressed many events in the large cities, in which thousands of Jews and non-Jews participated, and I explained Israel's positions to them. I had the honor of being received with warmth, love, excitement, and expressions of unlimited support for the State of Israel and its government. We held several meetings with leading industrialists, financiers, and leaders of investment firms in several large U.S. cities to solicit investments. We presented them with our program to encourage capital investments from abroad in industry, research, and development. The initial responses were positive, but it is clear that reaching the target will require ongoing efforts to convert those responses into action. The delegation of industrialists was active and did an excellent job.

The other events in which I participated, such as the presentation of honorary degrees, served as opportunities to explain Israel's positions to the U.S. public and as a full demonstration of support for Israel in many circles for its efforts to promote peace at the present time.

I was invited to meet with President Bush and Secretary of State Baker in Washington during my stay in the United States. Both meetings dealt at length with the peace process, and we concentrated on the next stage—that is, the continuation of bilateral negotiations between Israel and each of its neighbors.

The U.S. Administration informed us that since the sides did not reach an agreement on the venue for the talks, it intends to invite everybody to talks in Washington. In my talks with the President and the secretary of state, I explained our position that if there is a change in the Arab approach to direct negotiations with us, the first expression of that must be a readiness to conduct negotiations in our countries, in the region itself. Our neighbors, however, refuse to talk directly to us, even on the technical issue of the venue for the talks; instead, they appeal to the United States. That behavior does not show a readiness to conduct direct, genuine, free negotiations.

We tried to make direct contact with the Arab representatives, but nothing came of it. There were those who accepted our proposals and then recanted.

Washington itself does not suit us because of the distance and because it is not logistically feasible to hold the necessary tight contacts between the leaders of the negotiating

teams and the decisionmakers, so that the former can receive guidance from the political echelon, which of course is vital on such sensitive issues touching on Israel's life and death.

We were always told by the United States that it does not want to dictate to the sides, politically or even technically, about anything linked to the negotiations. They only want to be mediators, so-called honest brokers, and are only interested in the sides reaching an arrangement between themselves—a mutually agreed upon settlement.

In the meantime, it appears that the intention of the Arab side, to our regret, is not to negotiate with us, but to talk with the U.S. Administration so that the United States will impose on us the Arab positions, which are unacceptable to us. I expressed my opinion that we do not view that approach as a suitable or decent way of conducting honorable negotiations or as an efficient way to further the peace process. We asked our interlocutors in the administration, including the president, to reconsider the issue of the venue for the direct talks and to continue consultations with us until we reach an agreement acceptable to the sides. We did not insist on any proposal. We made various proposals that in our view could be acceptable to all, and I still hope that we will hear in the coming days about an arrangement that might also satisfy us. We are prepared to start immediately the substantial negotiations on each issue from our viewpoint. We are ready.

I returned home with a special blessing from U.S. Jewry for our efforts in the peace process, for our activities in immigrant absorption, and for our aspiration to attract investments. I must express my very warm thanks to the many Jews in the United States, who demonstrated with great warmth their support for Israel at this special hour. I have visited the United States several times, but never before did I feel such warmth and excitement. If anybody thought that there were differences of opinion among U.S. Jewry that could harm Israel's status, we were shown in recent days that they were wrong. U.S. Jewry stands behind us and will continue to do so.

[Qol Yisra'el's Arye Golan] Mr. Prime Minister, welcome home. You said you asked President Bush to reconsider the question of the venue. Does this mean that at this stage, Israel will not give any answer whatsoever to the invitation—said to have been sent in a very contemptuous manner—to report to Washington, and that you will wait for President Bush to change his views on the matter?

[Shamir] Of course we will discuss the matter. I told the president and the secretary of state that I would raise their proposal at various government forums, and that we will decide how to proceed.

[Golan] In the present circumstances and in view of what happened with the invitations, can Israel give a negative answer? Here in Israel, there was talk about a cheeky ultimatum—Minister Roni Milo said as much—and there were other statements.

[Shamir] I do not know what my colleagues said. I do not think there is room to talk in such terms. There is no ultimatum, and I would not use those adjectives. What we face here is a difference in approach. Both the president and the secretary of state—but the president in particular—stressed to me that the United States does not want to interfere in all the issues pending between the sides, neither in questions of substance nor in technical matters. They only want to be mediators and see to it that the contacts continue. When I explained to them what the Arabs think about the U.S. position, they told me that the Arabs are making a mistake if they think that way. If the Arabs think that the United States has changed its position and now agrees with all the Arab positions and opposes all the Israeli positions, then they are seriously mistaken. That is what the U.S. leaders think, or at least that is what they told me. I replied that this should also find its expression in all those points that would seem to be merely technical, such as the venue of the talks. I do not think that because of these problems the peace process will be terminated.

[Natan Gutman, Tel Aviv IDF Radio] Mr. Shamir, were you humiliated by the fact that the State Department issued invitations for a certain date and place before your meeting with the U.S. President?

[Shamir] I obviously complained about it. This is not a personal humiliation; this was not a personal matter at all. The atmosphere in the meeting with the president was very friendly, and a special effort was made to accord it such a character. I explained that they should not have proceeded in that way in our view.

[Gutman] When does Israel plan to reply to the U.S. proposal to hold the talks in Washington on 4 December?

[Shamir] We will discuss the issue and make a decision.

[Shlomo Ganor, Jerusalem Israel Television] Mr. Prime Minister, the right-wing parties have called on you to reassess Israel's position concerning the peace process. Do you adhere to the peace process this evening?

[Shamir] There is no doubt about that. I am convinced that our decision to go to the peace process was and remains the right decision, and there is no alternative to it.

[Ganor] Mr. Shamir, are you contemplating the possibility of calling an early election in view of the political and socioeconomic situation?

[Shamir] This is altogether a different question. As long as there is no need to hold elections prior to the date stipulated by law, I do no think it is necessary do so. It sometimes happens, and it has happened in Israel, that elections are held slightly earlier than the date set by law.

[Ganor] And this time?

[Shamir] We will see how matters develop.

[Gadi Sukenik, Jerusalem Israel Television] Despite all the statements, by both the Israeli and the U.S. sides, the

impression is that there is a personal crisis of confidence between yourself and President Bush, to which the Americans have contributed.

[Shamir] The Israeli media is usually the most extremist. There is no crisis of confidence whatsoever, either personal or otherwise. There are differences of opinion, but one cannot and should not talk of a crisis of confidence. There is a difference between the approach of the Arab side and our approach, and the United States is trying to iron out the differences between the Arabs and Israel. It is not always successful, however, and we get upset when they tilt toward the Arab side.

[Sukenik] One gets the impression that Israel has yielded on some substantial issues in the last few months, and that Israel is continuously being pressured to make concessions.

[Shamir] You keep insisting on that. Israel usually does not yield on matters of principle and substance. It seems to me that it is today clear to all in the Middle East and outside it that Israel does not plan to yield on what it considers matters of principle.

[David Makovsky, THE JERUSALEM POST] Mr. Prime Minister, do you think that the invitations were intentionally issued early? How do you interpret it? The Americans say it is a bureaucratic matter. Is it a signal? They say we built settlements each time Baker visited. How do you interpret the U.S. behavior?

[Shamir] You will give your interpretation in your newspaper. I explained exactly how it happened. They are the ones who should give the explanations. I consider the arrangement inappropriate. I take no notice of whether it was humiliating or not; I am only addressing the issue itself. I think these talks should not be held so far away from Israel, either in Washington or elsewhere. We have no objection in principle to Washington, and our opposition should not be seen that way. I think that for the sake of peace, it would be good if the talks were held in the region, or at least close to it.

[Makovsky] What are the alternatives? Could the talks on the venue begin in Washington? Could you elaborate?

[Shamir] There are all sorts of possibilities, and there is no need to go into detail. I hope that we will nevertheless reach an agreement.

'Sources' on Shamir Reaction to U.S. Invitation

TA2411103691 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 pp A1, 10

[By 'Aqiva Eldar and Ori Nir]

[Excerpts] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir will recommend tomorrow to the government or the senior ministerial team not to respond favorably to the U.S. invitation for the bilateral talks in Washington on 4 December as it is drafted in the letter by Secretary of State James Baker.

Senior political sources in Jerusalem said last night that Shamir will make Israel's participation in the next stage of negotiations conditional on a U.S. agreement that after at the most two meetings, which will deal with procedural issues only, the talks would move to Cyprus or another country in the region. The prime minister is also demanding that the United States not allow PLO members enter its territory. A U.S. rejection of his demands might cause the process to stop and even bring about early elections, against the background of other crises such as the approval of the state budget.

[[Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew on 24 November carries on page 3 a report by political correspondent Tzvi Gilat, adding: "Despite the American demand, Israel will not reply on Monday [25 November] to the letter of invitation to the bilateral talks in Washington. This will be just one symbolic expression of the rage in the prime minister's entourage and the Jerusalem ministries at the U.S. move.

"'We have procedures and authoritative bodies,' a political source said yesterday. 'The government or Inner Cabinet will have to decide about the reply. The Inner Cabinet only convenes on Wednesday [27 November], and there is no reason for us to change our custom just because the Americans shelled us with this one-sided announcement.'"

"A senior Foreign Ministry official who is close to the political process told me yesterday that 'the Americans made an unthinkable move, not only in terms of elementary courtesy. Their behavior raises the suspicion that they are surrendering to one party while ignoring Israel's desires.' Political sources said that Israel has shown its willingness in Madrid; it accepted things it previously considered a red flag, and now it is taking blows without even being given the opportunity to try and argue its points."]

An unconditional acceptance of the U.S. invitation might face serious opposition by the extreme right-wing parties. Last night, Likud members had severe reactions to the U.S. Administration behavior. Likud ministers said that they cannot recall such an insulting move by a friendly country and that it would be impossible to ignore the slap in the prime minister's face, seen in the fact that he heard about the invitation from the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem only four hours before he was about to raise this very issue in his meeting with President Bush. [passage omitted]

Jerusalem claims that Baker misled Shamir because it is obvious that the decision to send the invitations was made before Baker promised the prime minister to continue discussing the issue. Speaking to President Bush, Shamir expressed his agreement to open the talks in Washington and hold them there for a limited period of time and discuss procedural matters only, but Bush did not accept his suggestion.

Upon his return to Israel today, Shamir will announce whether he will bring his recommendation up for discussion at the government level or just before the senior political forum, including Ministers David Levi and Moshe Arens.

His associates believe the recommendation will be made unanimously because Minister Levi also has reservations about the administration behavior. [passage omitted]

Shamir's advisers, Elyaqim Rubinstein and Yosef Ben-Aharon, expressed Israel's protest against the U.S. move in a telephone conversation with Baker's aide, Dennis Ross. The latter apologized, saying it was a mistake, and explained that there was no intention to show disrespect for the prime minister.

In Jerusalem yesterday, sources mentioned the fact that in return for Israel's agreement to attend the Madrid conference, Baker promised that he would support Israel's demand that the bilateral talks be held in the region. At the same time, senior officials noted that during the Madrid conference, Shamir rejected a Soviet offer to hold the talks in Cyprus and insisted that the Arabs come to Israel and vice versa. After the Madrid conference, Israel delivered to Jordan an offer to meet in Cyprus, but the Jordanians avoided direct contact and sent their negative response through Washington.

Prime Minister Shamir claimed in his discussions with Bush and Baker that by inviting the parties to Washington, the United States has aided the Arab efforts to avoid direct negotiations. He further claimed that the atmosphere in Washington will tempt the parties to address the media and not each other and will not allow the pleasant feeling of hosting each other and of rapprochement that could be attained by meeting in the region. [passage omitted]

Officials also noted that the prime minister fears that, being in Washington, it will not be possible to hold consultations within the delegation and between it and Jerusalem without the Americans wiretapping their conversations.

Shamir is also displeased with the American dictate of the agenda for the bilateral talks in Washington. In the invitation, Baker suggests that "progress be made with the Syrians concerning the Golan Heights and security arrangements." This would place on the negotiating table, at the early stage, the issue of Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights, while Shamir had instructed the heads of the team for talks with Syria to suggest that the agenda include, at the first stage, a discussion of the nature of the peace and security arrangements, and does not deal with the issue of borders. [passage omitted]

Ministers React to U.S. Moves, Intentions

Arens—No Intent 'To Offend Israel'

TA2511132291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] Defense Minister Moshe Arens is not of the opinion that the United States is ignoring Israel's interests in the region. Our correspondent Ze'ev Kohen reports that, emerging from a meeting of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Minister Arens said such an assertion was incompatible with the close relations between Israel and the United States. As for the time chosen to send the invitations to the bilateral talks in Washington, the defense minister said it is hard to believe there was an intentional attempt to offend Israel and believes it was a misunderstanding. Minister Arens noted that Iran, Iraq, and Libya have been doing everything in their power to torpedo the political process and have been encouraging Hizballah.

Milo—U.S. Attitude 'Counterproductive'

TA2411171891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Police Affairs Minister Roni Milo by Menahem Friedman and Gilat Levi—live]

[Text] [Friedman] Good evening, Minister Milo.

[Milo] Good evening.

[Friedman] At today's cabinet meeting you used a definitely undiplomatic and uncommon expression about the United States: You urged avoiding a response to the Americans' cheeky ultimatum. That is a quote. Was that sentence made in the heat of the moment or was it a considered remark?

[Milo] I believe that U.S. behavior on the issue under discussion, the invitation to the talks and the way it was done, justifies that expression after deliberation and completely cool-headed thinking. I am not somebody known for making sharp statements on political issues. As you will probably recall, I was also deputy foreign minister for two years and I am very careful in my statements, especially in all matters relating to the United States, which is definitely Israel's best friend. This week, however, the prime minister met with the secretary of state and nothing was agreed upon. Minutes before his meeting with the president, he heard from the media that invitations were dispatched and a meeting was summoned in Washington without consultations, without updating him. I believe that to be a very grave matter for Israel. I believe that, as you justifiably pointed out, cabinet ministers who belong to the more moderate stream, and they do exist, were also angered and full of complaints about what occurred in this incident with the United States.

[Levi] Minister Milo, your proposal not to rush our answer is perhaps an action only to save honor. Perhaps we should simply quit the game?

[Milo] We should remember that the peace process and the peace that is the goal of the process are important to Israel. We are not acting with the intention of aiding the Americans or contributing to U.S. aims. We are first and foremost very interested in reaching our goal and achieving peace. That is a clear Israeli interest. I would, therefore, not under any circumstances call it quits. What I would do is make crystal clear right now to the Americans that their attitude toward Israel does not help the peace process, but only harms it. That is called counterproductive [previous word in English]—in a language the Americans know well—to the

chances of progress in the peace process. Anybody really interested in the process and its progress must not continue to act that way.

[Friedman] In other words, in the final analysis, you are saying that we will think slowly, hold up the answer a day or two to show them, but in the end, after an extended period of restraint and moderate thinking, we will say yes to Washington, yes to 4 December.

[Milo] That is not what I said. I said quite clearly that we will not accept the U.S. ultimatum to answer them by tomorrow.

[Levi] So you will reply the day after.

[Milo] No, the Americans knew full well that we do not accept ultimatums and we will not reply to such ultimatums. We will study and discuss the issue itself, and we will decide under what conditions we will reply positively, what our demands are for the continuation of the negotiations, and on what we will stand firm so that such phenomena do not recur. The Americans will have to know that they can only go so far with us. We were prepared to take unpleasant things, but there are limits—red lines—that we will not be able to cross. If the Americans are not prepared for those limits, then there will be a real danger to the continuation of the process, which we are very interested in. It must, however, be conducted according to fair rules that lead us to peace, and not through dictates that are dangerous for us.

[Friedman] You yourself say that this is not the first time the United States has treated us discourteously—if not worse—and there really are red lines and limits. Perhaps those, who from the start, saw the situation as one in which the Americans were not inclined to support the Israeli side were right, and therefore it was wrong from the start to enter into negotiations under the existing conditions, with the Americans treating us the way they do.

[Milo] It would be best for us to deal with those issues in a balanced way. We should not get carried away into extremism, in one way or the other. We must not be dragged in the direction of those who say we must give up everything and agree to everything. We must also not follow blindly those who say we must not even try or start the process since we know that the Americans are not an honest broker. We must act with caution, after deliberation, with great seriousness, and treat the issue with the gravity it deserves, because in the final analysis we are dealing with the most important issue for us: peace, our security here in the region, our existence. Deep consideration and responsibility must guide us. I believe that up to now the prime minister has shown such an approach, which was correct, and I am sure that in the future we will continue along that path.

Qatzav on 'Right To Say No'

TA2411091791 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Transportation Minister Moshe Qatzav by Ya'el Dan and 'Ido Baum—live]

[Text] [Dan] Good morning, Minister Qatzav. Before we address feelings of insult and anger, we have a technical question: Procedurally speaking, is it possible to deliver a reply by tomorrow? Does the Israeli decisionmaking process enable the cabinet to reply to the U.S. ultimatum by tomorrow?

[Qatzav] This issue is extremely serious and crucial to us as we would like to conclude a painful, 40-year-long chapter of wars. Therefore, we cannot be talked to in terms of ultimatums.

[Dan] But we are being talked to in that way.

[Qatzav] It should not have happened. In any event, a delay of another day or another week are entirely insignificant when what is at stake is the conclusion of a painful 40-year-long chapter of wars.

[Dan] You are saying it is insignificant, then. Is there a possibility that we will say no to the Americans?

[Qatzav] It should be clear that Israel is the only country in the region whose security is at stake. We will be unable to endorse any decision unless we are certain that it will not weaken us and that it will help us move toward the objective of peace. Therefore, if any Middle East country has the right to say no, it is the State of Israel. We have a vested interest in the talks and in peace. We do not regard the holding of talks in Washington as a matter of principle; rather, as a technical problem, albeit important if the talks are to be successful. Bilateral talks between teams of officials and experts cannot be held in Washington, because in the course of negotiations and discussions, those teams have to receive instructions from ministers and from the prime minister; they have to return home daily for consultations on tactics and on the next stages of discussions. All these cannot be accomplished at such a distance. We rejected Europe on these grounds, and the United States is even worse in this respect. The talks must be conducted in the region for the simple reason that at the end of each day, the delegations have to return to Israel and to meet with the prime minister and with the relevant ministers, to consult with them, and to receive guidance and instructions, then to return to the negotiating table the following day.

[Dan] Prime Minister Shamir has already said as much in Washington, Mr. Qatzav, and yet an invitation was sent out—one could say almost behind his back.

[Qatzav] Well, the prime minister is coming home today, and I am certain he will brief us and consult with us before a stand is formulated. In any case, in my opinion our stand should be that out of concern for the cause, for the success of the talks, Israel wants the talks to be held here in the Middle East. The Arabs have rejected our

suggestion to meet in Israel and in Arab countries, but Cyprus or some other country here in the Middle East is a possibility, as long as the delegates are able to return home at the end of each day of negotiations.

By the way, were the talks held on the level of heads of state, there would have been no objection to holding them even in faraway America. Heads of state would have had all the necessary authority....

[Dan, interrupting] Excuse me, Mr. Qatzav, I have to interrupt you. This stage is behind us, as an invitation has already been sent out. The question is whether, when the question is posed in the cabinet, your answer will be yes or no.

[Qatzav] I will formulate my position after I hear the prime minister's report on his talks with the U.S. secretary of state and the U.S. president.

[Baum] Minister Qatzav, do you think that after what happened this weekend, we can still regard the United States as an honest and impartial broker?

[Qatzav] To be frank, I have had doubts about the U.S. plans and the sincerity of its intentions as an honest broker for a very long time. We have repeatedly seen the United States reneging on its promises. More than once, we witnessed manifestations of U.S. stands, which are incompatible with Israel's security needs.

[Dan] How then can we remain participants in a process which is run by a country we mistrust at the moment?

[Qatzav] We have an interest in the peace talks and in reaching a political settlement in the Middle East. As a result, we are occasionally obliged to swallow bitter pills. We hope that any future pills we have to take will not pertain to substance and that Israel's survival will not be endangered. We will never agree to that. We can take an occasional unjust attitude or expression of positions unfair to us, provided they do not abut on substance or prove detrimental to Israel's security. It is on this point that we have to insist.

[Dan] We than you very much, Minister Qatzav.

[Qatzav] Thank you.

Olmert on 'Unilateral' U.S. Pressure

TA2411064391 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Health Minister Ehud Olmert by Shalom Qital—live]

[Text] [Qital] Good morning, Minister Ehud Olmert.

[Olmert] Good morning.

[Qital] What is your opinion of the U.S. invitation to talks?

[Olmert] Well, it is an invitation.

[Qital] Is it perhaps more serious than an invitation, as it was relayed to Jerusalem while the prime minister was about to meet with the U.S. president to discuss this very issue?

[Olmert] You are obviously not asking about the very fact that invitations were issued, but rather about the style, method, and degree of coordination, and—as you probably meant to say—the presence or absence of good manners in this whole process of dialogue between us and the United States.

[Qital] The question is whether there is merely a problem of manners or also an intimation of how the process is going to unravel.

[Olmert] I do not think there is an intimation; there is an explicit statement. There is absolutely no doubt whatsoever that this administration is not even pretending to show—not even for appearances' sake—any degree of friendliness or making any attempt to reach coordination, which was customary with previous administrations.

[Qital] Minister Olmert, perhaps this is an advantage to us in some sense, since this way Israel knows exactly what it is up against. Is it possible that the era of illusion is over?

[Olmert] I don't know that there ever was an era of illusion—it was your phrase—or whether it is over or not. I would suggest using such expressions as sparingly as possible, because I do not see what good they are.

The objective situation is not at all simple, and it does not necessarily pertain to the venue or timing of the talks, which—as the prime minister himself pointed out—are not the central issue. In my opinion, the real problem lies in several areas: in the basic stands of the parties with whom we are supposed to negotiate peace, with the issues at stake being so crucial to us; in the degree of the U.S. readiness to adopt the role of a sort of a mediator, or an authoritative factor; and in the degree to which the role it adopts is characterized by unilateral pressure on one side to the point of a readiness, a desire, I would even say almost a passion to engage in a public confrontation with that party in a bid to force stands unacceptable to it. In my view, this is the main issue, and all the rest is but a result of that.

[Qital] There are more substantial questions beyond the issues of time and place. What will you recommend when the cabinet is asked to vote on whether we are to go to Washington on 4 December?

[Olmert] Since you are asking about my recommendation to the cabinet, I believe it would be inappropriate for me to discuss it on the radio. I will do so when a debate is held, when the cabinet convenes to make a decision.

[Qital] Let me rephrase the question: Can the U.S. invitation be declined?

[Olmert] This question is easy: It can certainly be declined, if we decide that we are willing to wage battle over this issue.

If not, we may be forced to detach various issues from their context at any point in the future and wonder: Are we going to refuse cooperation over such an issue? Are we going to wage public battle over such a point? Are we going to engage in confrontation with the U.S. Administration over such a thing? By the same token, one can ask: If the president wants to dictate a date for a negotiation encounter, can he not hold it for three hours and at least pretend to consult with the prime minister? All these questions can be asked from either slant. I am not saying that my position is that we ought to refuse the invitation at this stage; nor am I saying that this is what the cabinet should decide. However, I am not ready to accede—not even as a premise—that we cannot say no. We can say no any time the cabinet believes such a reply will serve national interests.

[Qital] Thank you very much, Minister Ehud Olmert.

[Olmert] You are welcome.

Nisim Cites U.S. 'Dictates'

TA2411164091 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Studio interview with Moshe Nisim, deputy prime minister and industry and trade minister, by Dan Margalit—live]

[Excerpt] [Margalit] I will first address you in your capacity as deputy prime minister. Do you think that Israel should give a positive answer and show up in Washington on 4 December under the present circumstances and in spite of the Americans' behavior?

[Nisim] First of all, I would like to voice my astonishment at the way the Americans dealt with this issue. We will definitely not abide by dictates and give an answer by tomorrow morning or by any other time. We will discuss the issue according to our own timetable—that is, on Wednesday—and we will make our decision then.

Although the question of the venue would appear to be a minor technical matter, this is not so. We are talking about a decades-long enmity between the Arab people and countries—who did not want us to exist and sought to annihilate us—and the State of Israel. Negotiations held alternately in Israel and Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon could break the psychological barrier and promote peace more than any other process pursued in the past.

[Margalit] The Americans apparently do not disagree with some of the logic behind your remarks, which reflect the Israeli position, but the reality is different. Do you believe that Israel will go to Washington on 4 December under the present circumstances?

[Nisim] I believe that the Inner Cabinet will discuss the matter in its meeting on Wednesday. There may be room to agree to the initial stage of this bilateral meeting in Washington, but there is no substitute to negotiations in the region. I believe the United States will be making an unfortunate mistake if it thinks that by forcing this wish on Israel, it will be promoting peace. Peace can be promoted through the willingness of the sides to reach peace, and this will not come about through pressures of any kind.

[Margalit] Will you agree to have Israel go to the opening stage in Washington, in difficult conditions and under protest?

[Nisim] I do not want to voice my own personal opinion before I have heard the prime minister's report, which will probably be delivered to the Inner Cabinet on Wednesday. I believe there will be room to agree temporarily to one or two sessions.

[Margalit] Do you think the Americans humiliated and abased Shamir—not personally, but as the representative of the State of Israel?

[Nisim] There is no doubt about that. The U.S. behavior does not befit normal relations between two countries, certainly not relations between heads of state. I believe that the conduct toward the Israeli prime minister, who represents not only the government, but the entire State of Israel, was inappropriate.

[Margalit] The Americans may have wanted to stress that there is a deep crisis in our relations. After all, the Americans do not act offhandedly, and they are neither impolite nor irresponsible.

[Nisim] That was also astonishing. During the Gulf war, we conducted ourselves the way we did, and we won unprecedented praise.

[Margalit] Perhaps that was a mistake.

[Nisim] I do not want to talk about spilled milk. In any event, that was Israel's policy and that was how we conducted ourselves. The United States praised Israel, but shortly afterwards they attacked us. In July, when the prime minister accepted the proposal of President Bush and Secretary of State Baker to set a date in October for the one-time international gathering, Israel was lavished with praise; but this was followed shortly afterward with unreasonable behavior, with attacks on Israel. In the third stage, the Madrid conference, Israel won immense praise...

[Margalit, interrupting] But it did not win any dividends.

[Nisim] Indeed, it did not. We are very yielding on questions that are seemingly technical rather than of substance. However, if the United States thinks this is the way it will persuade us when we get to the substance, it is mistaken.

[Margalit] Do you think we are too yielding?

[Nisim] Some think so.

[Margalit] And what do you think?

[Nisim] There is a limit to how much we can yield. In fact, what has happened with the process so far is that Israel has been complying with the U.S. requests, the Arabs have been making more demands, and the United

States has been turning to Israel and asking it to make more and more concessions. This will have to end some day. [passage omitted]

Ze'evi—U.S. 'Hostile to Israel'

TA2411093191 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0900 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Excerpts] In anticipation of the prime minister's return from Washington, cabinet ministers have been voicing increasingly harsh criticism of the way the United Stated invited Israel to bilateral negotiations in Washington. [passage omitted]

Minister Rehav'am Ze'evi said that the U.S. Administration is hostile to Israel and urged the cabinet to reconsider its decision to take part in the political process.

Knesset Member Ge'ula Kohen urged her associates in Tehiya to submit a motion of no-confidence in the government if it does not decide to withdraw from the political process.

Envoy to U.S. Discusses Talks Invitation

TA2511074891 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0600 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Telephone interview with Zalman Shoval, Israeli ambassador to the United States, by Ya'el Dan and Gay Zohar—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Good day to Zalman Shoval, our ambassador in Washington.

[Shoval] Good morning.

[Zohar] Did you receive a list of conditions or reservations that Israel wants the United States to accept before it responds positively to the invitation to come to Washington at the beginning of December?

[Shoval] No, and I am not certain I will receive such a list because our position, the prime minister's position, was made perfectly clear in the meetings he held here. As a matter of fact, we are now awaiting the U.S. response.

[Dan] What did Mr. Shamir clarify? Will we accept the invitation or not?

[Shoval] Naturally, I will not discuss this since the meeting was closed. At the same time, it is absolutely clear to the U.S. president and secretary of state just what our position is. It is not one of confrontation. We certainly seek no confrontation with the Americans on a seemingly technical issue. Still, the technical aspect has several implications that could determine the nature of future negotiations. This was made clear.

[Zohar] So is Israel awaiting a U.S. commitment that it will press for discussions in the region next time?

[Shoval] Look, the Americans have said and are saying that in principle, and I believe in practice as well, they support the Israeli position that in order to make progress, negotiations must be held in the region or the vicinity. Since the Americans assumed the role of sponsor for this whole business—and without them, I believe that even the Madrid event would not have taken place and perhaps not the continuation—we expect them to extend their activity beyond the declarative level.

[Zohar] Yes, but they are awaiting our response. It is supposed to be given today, our time, or tomorrow in Washington. Is Israel coming to the 4 December meeting?

[Shoval] Look, the State of Israel has to make its own decision. No one can dictate to it how long to debate or when to answer. Israel, like any other sovereign country, has its own rules and regulations. We are a democratic state, and we have a cabinet that makes decisions. The cabinet does not follow Washington dictates on when to convene. It follows a timetable determined in Jerusalem.

[Zohar] But your presentation of the issue makes it seem that Israel is awaiting a U.S. reply.

[Shoval] Israel is expecting certain clarifications so that it can make a decision.

[Dan] Is there a possibility that Israel will agree to hold the meeting in Washington now, with a U.S. guarantee that the talks will continue in the region?

[Shoval] This could certainly be a theoretical possibility. I do not know whether this will be the Israeli Government decision. This, however, could be a formula that Israel could accept. Israel is not being stubborn on all these issues. I believe that Israel has shown significant flexibility over the past months and weeks on many issues, and we are not looking for an excuse or a reason not to continue with regard to this issue as well. Who is interested in the continuation of the negotiations more than we? At the same time, as was said before, sometimes the first step determines the direction.

[Zohar] Could Israel agree to come to Washington without a U.S. commitment that the talks will continue in the region?

[Shoval] These are hypothetical questions at this stage. In any event, I am not the man to answer them. I believe that the Israeli Government will make its stands very clear to the Americans.

[Dan] Mr. Shoval, how do you explain the manner in which the invitation was given to us, a manner which I believe could be called insulting? Did the Americans apologize or make any clarifications?

[Shoval] Unofficially, people who are in the center of things claim that this was the result of a mishap. OK, if that is what they say, we hear them.

[Zohar] You do not sound like someone who accepts that claim.

[Shoval] Look, mishaps can happen, but are regrettable.

[Dan] Do I detect a lot of resentment in your tone of voice?

[Shoval] Resentment? No, but I believe—as we all do—that the State of Israel, like the entire Middle East, is entering a process that is critical and significant for its future and security. It is preferable for the United States, as an honest broker at the least—and we, for our part, believe that it should be more than that because, after all, we are allies—not to make mistakes and not have such mishaps.

[Zohar] Do you mean that the United States, in view of Baker's pledge at the Madrid conference to invest more effort in the process, is not being an honest broker?

[Shoval] We do not believe that the time has come to take a stand on this issue, but we want this issue to be perfectly clear, not only because it is vital to us but because it is vital to the negotiations.

[Zohar] Ambassador Zalman Shoval, thank you.

[Shoval] Thank you.

Ahime'ir on Reply to U.S., Early Elections

TA2511165291 Tel Aviv Educational Television Network in Hebrew 1500 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Interview with Yosi Ahime'ir, director of Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's bureau, by Rafi Reshef—live]

[Text] [Reshef] Do you know when Israel will reply to the Americans?

[Ahime'ir] No, not yet.

[Reshef] What are the options? It is a foregone conclusion that the answer will not be given today.

[Ahime'ir] The prime minister went back to work in his office today. He held a series of consultations with ministers and associates, and he will hold more tomorrow. Actually, he is still holding consultations at this very moment. He will probably decide what to say and when to say it when he is done.

[Reshef] The what is more or less clear, I think, or do you conceive of the possibility that he may refuse altogether to send Israel's representatives to Washington?

[Ahime'ir] Israel is very interested in this process, in promoting the peace. After all, this is an Israeli initiative and we certainly do not want to break it up or to terminate the process. The question is where the bilateral talks will be pursued, and this is what the current deliberations are all about.

[Reshef] Giving a positive reply to Washington but with conditions attached and not by the deadline stipulated by the Americans—is this a minor show of muscle?

[Ahime'ir] This is no show of muscle. We do not follow what I would call an artificial timetable. We act, first and foremost, according to Israel's considerations, which are to promote the peace process. Everybody knows the reason why we did not give an answer about Washington and why we still insist that the negotiations should be held in our region or nearby.

[Reshef] Does Jerusalem know the reason why the Americans are not only determined but also go to great lengths to hurt—not to say humiliate—Israel, or the prime minister in this case?

[Ahime'ir] The reason is obvious, but let nobody think this is why we have been delaying our answer. The deliberations are relevant and to the point, seeing that we believe that for the sake of peace the talks should be held in the region, while the Americans want them to continue in Washington. We are discussing this point. The prime minister is briefing the ministers about what he heard from President Bush in their face-to-face meeting. Based on this briefing the ministers will ultimately make a decision.

[Reshef] You did not answer my question as to why in addition to being determined—which may be understandable—the Americans are being so tough with us.

[Ahime'ir] I cannot answer that; I do not think it is my job to explain why the Americans are being tough or not. I do not think they are being particularly tough. Everybody saw their conduct with regard to the invitations. They hastened to issue the invitations as the prime minister was making his way from the Department of State to the White House. This was inappropriate, to say the least. All of us, both right and left, are unanimous that this was not only offensive to Shamir but it was definitely offensive to Israel. Why they did that I do not know; perhaps they are sorry about it now.

[Reshef] Is Mr. Shamir inclined to call an early election?

[Ahime'ir] That is not on his agenda at the moment. There is only one thing on his agenda at the moment: to promote the peace process and to safeguard Israel's interests and honor; this is what is on his agenda at the moment.

However, a situation could definitely emerge tomorrow or the next day where elections could be brought forward. Still, November 1992 is close enough, almost around the corner.

[Reshef] You talk about a specific situation. Could you give us an example of what would have to happen to make Yitzhaq Shamir move the elections forward even if they were only six months away?

[Ahime'ir] Yitzhaq Shamir does not plan to initiate early elections, but this could be brought about by a certain situation. For example, deliberations are under way on the state budget. We hope the problem with the special budget allocations to religious institutions will be settled within the next few days. Then again, it might not, and we might be faced with a situation whereby a budget has not been presented to the Knesset Finance Committee. There could be delays and this could lead to a crisis.

[Reshef] So, are you saying that those who hastened to pin their hopes on the prime minister's words—that we should wait and see how things develop—got slightly carried away?

[Ahime'ir] I cannot see the prime minister personally initiating an early election, although deep inside he and all Likud members know that an early election would only increase the Likud's power and strengthen the current government with regard to its way in the future. However, although Yitzhaq Shamir himself does not plan to initiate an early election, this could still happen.

[Reshef] Is it true that you have been gauging the mood among the religious parties?

[Ahime'ir] The religious parties are definitely good and loyal partners in the coalition, but they differ over the special budget allocations. I hope this will be settled, perhaps even this evening. If it is, there will be no reason, certainly not from their quarters, to call an early election and trigger a coalition crisis.

Poll—78 Percent Say 'Yes' to Talks in Washington

TA2511115291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 25 Nov 91 p 1

[Public opinion poll "conducted by the Dahaf Institute under the management of Dr. Mina Tzemah"]

[Text] Question: In view of the fact that the U.S. Administration decided, against Israel's will, to summon the continuation of the talks in Washington, should we accept the invitation?

Yes—78 percent.

No—22 percent.

The question was posed to a representative sample of 619 people by telephone yesterday.

Media Reaction to U.S. Invitation to Talks

TA2411142491

[Editorial Report] Most of the Israeli dailies on 24 November carry commentaries and editorials reacting to the U.S. invitation to attend the first stage of the bilateral talks in Washington on 4 December. All of the reactions note that the manner in which the invitation to Israel was issued is an insult to Prime Minister Shamir, and most of them condemn this. Some of the reactions, however, state that Shamir was himself impolite to the Americans in the past, and is to blame for what happened. The newspapers assert that, in fact, Shamir has two options: accepting the invitation or calling early elections.

Writing on page A1 of Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew, under the headline "The Prime Minister's Honor," Yo'el Marcus says: "I do not remember an incident where an Israeli prime minister was ever so bluntly and harshly humiliated, as Shamir was this time." Marcus claims: " There are manners of behavior that are hard to swallow, no matter how dependent we are on the United States." He goes on to observe: "When Shamir came to see Bush, he could no longer talk about the guarantees" because "he had been warned—yes, really warned—not to raise this issue in his meeting with Bush." At the same time, "there was no point in raising the issue of the venue, for the administration had already established the fact. Once again the administration decided in favor of the Arab stand (and that is happening much too often); one does not need to be too sensitive to smell the expected forced arrangement." Marcus says that "the prime minister's honor is the honor of the state," and right now, it is very low.

Tel Aviv HADASHOT in Hebrew carries a front-page commentary by Tzvi Gilat, entitled "Bush Clarifies Who is the Boss," where he writes: "The manner in which the Americans called for the continuation of the bilateral talks was meant to make it clear that, although officially the parties are going to hold direct talks, the Americans intend to control the process and dictate its nature and pace. They are the bosses in Washington." Gilat says that Israel will withhold its reply, and will present conditions for accepting the invitation, but "in any event, Shamir will file this incident. He will open the file when he decides to blow up the process."

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT's editorial, entitled "A Futile Insistence," on page 2 says that "one does not have to be an incorrigible fanatic to feel badly insulted by the ringing slap in the face we were delivered by the Bush and Baker administration." The paper adds that the public will support the government if it reacts because "it is not willing to take the blows without response. The majority, however, will not forgive the government if—because of its futile insistence on a secondary issue such as venue—it stops the talks, God forbid." The editorial adds: "It is regrettable that the prime minister himself is to blame for the creation of this new complication" because he rejected Pankin's offer, made during the Madrid conference, to hold the talks in Cyprus, while his demand to hold the talks in Israel and the Arab countries stood little chance. YEDI'OT AHARONOT asks: "How could he not understand that it was already too late" when he suggested Cyprus as venue in his Washington talks.

In a commentary on page 1, entitled "The Americans Were Disappointing As Well," in Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew, Hemi Shalev writes: "More should and could have been expected of the Americans. Even if the Israeli Government is well versed in provocations, even if it conducts negotiations the way a common shopkeeper would, and even if it drives Bush and Baker crazy—one could expect the U.S. Administration not to be lured by provocations and cheap tricks. Last weekend, the Americans did not stand up to expectations." Shalev says that although the issue is not crucial, "it is impossible to deny the prime minister his right to present his arguments to the administration. Shamir should not have been made a laughingstock, even if he is irritating." Noting the feeling of crisis in U.S.-Israeli relations, Shalev stresses: "Let us make no mistake about the feeling we have in view of the events of the past few days: An unbridgeable gap has

been created in the confidence between Jerusalem and Washington. Israel is responsible for this state of affairs; but it is not the only one to blame," he concludes.

Under the headline "Weeping and Retreating" on page A2 of Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew, 'Aqiva Eldar says: "Good manners have not been an outstanding characteristic of the U.S.-Israeli talks ever since the peace process started: Yitzhaq Shamir has welcomed James Baker with new settlements, and now George Bush surprises his Israeli guest with fresh invitations sent while Shamir was on his way from the Department of State to the White House." Eldar notes that the Bush-Shamir meeting, "which was forced on Bush," was preceded by a "series of provocative declarations on geographic ('the territories are ours forever') and economic ('technicalities will not hold up the guarantees') issues." The commentary also notes that two weeks after rejecting Pankin's offer to hold the talks in Cyprus because he insisted that the talks be held in the Middle East, Shamir went to Washington asking for Cyprus and "found an invitation to Washington, with a vague promise of moving the talks to the region in due time." Eldar concludes: "Once again Shamir will have to choose one of two options: To win the support of the right-wing majority in his government and stop the cart at the gates of Washington; or, as he has been doing in the past six month, to weep and retreat, and then wait until the next station."

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew carries a commentary on page 2 by Washington-based correspondent Rami Tal entitled "Shamir's Remaining Card: Early Elections." Tal states: "The show called 'U.S.-Israeli relations' goes on, but the players changed roles. Until a few months ago, Israel used to spit in the Americans' face, establishing new settlements whenever Baker's plane approached Ben-Gurion Airport. Now the Americans are dishing it to us by sending invitations for the bilateral talks in the small hours of the night, before Shamir had even had the chance to present Israel's stand to the president.

"Shamir still tried to salvage some prestige when he announced that the government 'will discuss' the humiliating U.S. invitation; but he knows full well that this is an invitation one cannot refuse, in the best tradition of the Mafia."

"It is especially hard to refuse when the president is holding the key to the bank."

Tal notes that the prime minister still has several cards up his sleeve, "the trump card being early elections." Tal speculates that if Shamir resigns and calls early elections, he will gain a respite of some four to five months, "during which he will be able to haggle with the U.S. Administration." Tal asserts that "Bush and Baker may grit their teeth, but moving elections forward is an internal matter" for which they will not be able to condemn Shamir.

Tal argues that advancing elections "is a brilliant, but risky trick." Shamir does not have a lot to lose, but the Likud does, because it is hard to believe that "anything could happen that could strengthen the Likud" by the time elections are held. Nevertheless, Tal notes, "conducting negotiations from a state of transitional government is very comfortable: No one is expecting it to make real and painful concessions."

Commentary on Problems for Palestinians at Talks

TA2411104791 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p 2

[Pinhas 'Inbari commentary: "The Palestinians Are in Trouble"]

[Text] The summons to Washington established a conflict of interests between the Palestinian delegation and the PLO and furthermore created difficulties for the Palestinian delegation inside the territories themselves. Washington has still not replied to the PLO's demand for entry visas to the United States for its personnel, and it would be safe to assume that not all the PLO staff, who were there in Madrid such as spokesman 'Abd-al-Rahman or Akram Haniyah, would receive visas. Faysal al-Husayni will not be able to "hop" to Tunisia or Morocco to exchange views with 'Arafat, and the distance between the PLO and the delegation will stand out more clearly than before.

Hanan 'Ashrawi, on the other hand, will have a better opportunity to "win over" the U.S. media, and the proximity to the White House and the Department of State will play more into the Palestinians' hands than into Israel's, as the parties will be required to demonstrate a serious attitude without marking time. Yet this will not be enough to console the PLO, which will be left out of the picture in a more blatant way.

Nevertheless, the "London forum," which supports the delegation, will be able to come to Washington, even though it is affiliated with the PLO. It includes personalities such as Nabil Sha'th and 'Afif Safiyah, the PLO's ambassador in London.

Another problem the Palestinian delegation will encounter will be that the United States is perceived in the territories as Israel's chief protector, so that even if the Washington talks do not immediately result in the stoppage of settlement activity, the delegation will face difficulties in confronting the home front.

Jordan, whose immediate acceptance of the invitation actually pulled the chestnuts out of the fire for the United States, leaves the Palestinian delegation no choice. In so doing it is again trying to take the reins of the initiative, which it forfeited when it stumbled lamely behind Faysal al-Husayni and his colleagues in Madrid, by channeling the course of action for the joint delegation. Its positions generate mounting troubles with Syria.

Syria To Present 'Detailed Plan' at Peace Talks

TA2411070491 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p 2

[By Arab affairs correspondent 'Uzi Mahanaymi]

[Text] Sources in Damascus have reported that Syria prepared a detailed plan for an arrangement with Israel and will present it during the peace talks in Washington.

The main points of the plan are: Israel's withdrawal from the Golan Heights; leaving the Israeli settlements on the Golan under Syrian sovereignty; and the establishment of two parallel and demilitarized security strips that will be under international supervision for 15 years, until confidence between the two countries is built.

It has been reported that the Syrians believe that "there are things to talk about," despite Israeli declarations that it will not withdraw from the Golan Heights

The detailed plan, prepared with the help of Syrian Army experts, includes maps showing the proposed arrangements. In order to circumvent the "problem of the Israeli settlements" on the Golan Heights—which the Syrians believe are the main reason for its refusal to withdraw—the Syrians will suggest that all the Israeli settlements set up before the Madrid conference will remain intact with access routes for Israel.

In terms of security, the Syrians will offer mutual demilitarization of a 20-km strip. Israel will be asked to demilitarize the Hula Valley; in return, the Syrians will demilitarize most of the Golan Heights territory. A multinational force, made up of troops from the five permanent members of the UN Security Council, will be stationed in the demilitarized areas.

The Syrians are suggesting that beyond the demilitarized strip, there will be an additional "thinned-out" area in which only infantry will be stationed, with tanks and armored units placed at their rear.

Rabin on Golan Heights, Need for Talks Venue

TA2411162091 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p 3

[Text] The current border with Syria on the Golan Heights is a line formed by "sneak" [zhilot] and speedy military operations after the cease-fire became effective; there is therefore no reason it should be sacrosanct, said Knesset Member [MK] Yitzhaq Rabin yesterday.

Rabin, Army chief of staff during the Six-Day War and the person chiefly responsible for the delineation of the current border, said he would "buy" peace from the Syrians "tomorrow, if they agreed to a territorial compromise on the Golan Heights that we could agree to." Rabin was speaking at the Tel Aviv Commercial-Industrial Club.

"By this I do not mean that the line is a bad one from the military point of view," Rabin continued, "but it is not an ideology. I would like to guarantee security. Peace is a component of security, and I want peace with Syria without leaving the Golan Heights. That is almost a dream. We are talking about a stretch of land 20 to 23 km in width. That is why I refrained from drawing the line at the 2d or 4th km."

Rabin said he does not believe in "peace with an Arab country in return for peace." He expressed no doubt that the reason Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad joined the political process was not because he has turned into a "lover of Israel," but because he saw the changing circumstances in the world and because he had lost the Soviet umbrella forever.

Rabin maintained that the danger to Israel's existence is currently smaller than prior to the Gulf war. The situation is presently very good for Israel, said Rabin, and the conditions for peace, immigrant absorption, and economic development are ripe.

"The promotion of the peace process affects our ability to solve the problems of immigrant absorption, as well as those of the younger generation, and our ability to strengthen the economy," MK Rabin said. He claimed that without government involvement it would be impossible to expand sources of productive income.

Rabin took the opportunity to attack the prime minister, who was still in the United States, saying that those who fail to realize that the political reality and the beginning of the peace process could be conducive to the creation of the necessary economic conditions cannot understand where lies the key to the effective handling of the beginning of Israeli economic change.

He also commented that the prime minister wastes precious time on marginal issues that are not vital to peace and the promotion of the economy or immigrant absorption, such as the venue and date for the next phase of the talks.

Syrian Role in Lockerbie Explosion Unclear

TA2311204391 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Excerpts] Knowledgeable security sources this evening expressed surprise at the attempt in Israel to point the accusing finger at Syria for the Lockerbie disaster, in which 270 people on a Pan Am aircraft perished over Scotland three years ago. Our army affairs correspondent learned that Israel has no information firmly linking Syria with the aircraft's explosion. Moshe Shlonsky brings further details:

Israeli sources associated with the investigation of the Lockerbie catastrophe were surprised this week when Israel approached the United States unofficially, pointing a finger at Syria and alleging that it was an accessory to the terrorist act of blowing up the aircraft. Israel has obtained U.S. and British information in the past few days, indicating that it was Libyan intelligence that was behind the explosion. [passage omitted]

There is no reason why the U.S.-British version on Libya's involvement in the affair should not be accepted, but it is clear to Israel that there were other accomplices as well. Ahmad Jibril's fingerprint is clear on the plastic material (Sampex) used in the explosion. Israel is still not 100 percent sure exactly what role Syria played in the attack, except for the fact that Jibril operates out of bases in Syria.

Jordan Said Violating Hawk Missile Contract

TA2511112991 Tel Aviv DAVAR in Hebrew 25 Nov 91 p 1

[Report by O. Levi]

[Excerpts] A senior Air Force source claims that Jordan is violating the terms of its contracts with the United States and is rendering its Hawk missile batteries mobile. According to the source, in the U.S.-Jordanian agreement—the details of which were given to Israel—Jordan pledged to use the antiaircraft missiles it purchased in the United States in stationary batteries only; nonetheless it is rendering them mobile.

Jordan is expected to sign a large purchase deal with France soon and buy a large number of Mirage 2000 jets. The source added that last year there was a significant increase in aviation purchase requests by most Arab countries, including Libya, Saudi Arabia, and Iran. [passage omitted]

Iran has been making significant efforts to modernize and strengthen its air power, which was eroded in the eight-year war with Iraq. For example, since the end of the Gulf war, Iran has purchased some 1,000 assault helicopters of high quality and is conducting contacts with the USSR to purchase Sukhoi-24's and MiG- 29's.

The Air Force source claims that Libya has a particularly large Air Force and is investing large sums of money in improving its aerial ability. The Libyans have been trying to attain midair refueling ability for its MiG-23's according to reports.

In Israel it is said that the Syrian-USSR deal has not taken place yet and that Syria has serious difficulties, mainly economic, in view of its past debts to the Soviets. Syria continues to purchase control systems and long-range missiles at the same time.

Reaction to Ghali as New UN Secretary General

Shamir Comments on Appointment

TA2411145291 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p 5

[Report by New York correspondent Tzadoq Yehezqeli]

[Excerpt] Western diplomats in the United Nations reacted to Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir's criticism of the election of Butrus Ghali as secretary general of the United Nations with utter astonishment. This criticism absolutely contradicts the policy outlined by the Foreign Ministry on the issue.

Replying to questions by Israeli correspondents in Washington, Shamir said: "Israel's standing in the United Nations is not brilliant, and this election merely underscores it." Shamir's remarks put Israel in a most ridiculous position in the United Nations and created the first confrontation with the new secretary general.

On Friday, one hour before the interview with Shamir, the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem issued an official communique congratulating Ghali on his election and stating that Israel would vote for him in the General Assembly next week. This policy was greeted with praise in the United Nations. [passage omitted]

[On the same page, YEDI'OT AHARONOT carries an interview with Butrus Ghali by Smadar Peri. Asked to comment on Shamir's remarks, Ghali says: "What do you expect me to say? I realize that Mr. Shamir does not have any expectations of me, and I have no comment on what he said."]

Doron Hopes Ghali To Help in POW Issue

TA2311060891 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1805 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Sara Doron, the chairperson of the Likud Knesset faction, today sent a congratulatory message to Butrus Ghali on his election as UN secretary general. In her message, Knesset Member Doron expressed the hope that in his new post, Ghali will take action toward finding a solution to regional problems and the release of POW's and MIA's. Our Knesset correspondent Ya'aqov Ahime'ir reports that next week an Egyptian parliamentary delegation will hold a reciprocal visit to Israel as the guest of the Likud faction.

Hopes for Ghali Neutrality Expressed

TA2211183291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1800 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Israel hopes the next UN secretary general, Egypt's Butrus Ghali, will maintain a neutral stand on the Arab-Israeli conflict. This was stated Yosi Ahime'ir, the head of the prime minister's bureau. Ahime'ir noted Ghali's role in paving the road to the Camp David accords, and said he is one of the most positive Egyptian leaders as far as Israel is concerned. However, the prime minister's adviser also mentioned Ghali's commitment to the traditional Egyptian stand, which demands that Israel give up all the territories, including East Jerusalem. We hope, Ahime'ir added, that as UN secretary general his considerations will be different.

Fears Ghali To Impede POW Release

TA2411123891 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p A4

[Commentary by Gay Bekhor: "Fear in Israel That Ghali's Election Would Make the Release of Hostages More Difficult"]

[Excerpts] Fear was expressed in Israel over the weekend that the new UN secretary general's taking office in January might impede the process of the release of foreign hostages and the Israeli POW's and MIA's.

Circles involved in the hostage release negotiations said that outgoing Secretary General Perez de Cuellar has forged good ties with Iran and the Shiites in Lebanon, who have already proved their mettle in releasing more than half the Western hostages. These were Islamic Jihad Shiites who sought Perez de Cuellar's mediation due to his success in effecting a cease-fire between Iran and Iraq and bringing an end to their eight-year war three years ago.

These circles noted that Secretary General-designate Butrus Ghali may encounter a cool attitude from Tehran against the backdrop of tension between Egypt and Khomeyni's Iran. It was the late President al-Sadat, Dr. Butrus Ghali's mentor, who provided political asylum to the shah when he fled his homeland in 1979. The shah and his father are buried side by side in a Cairo mosque. Moreover, Egypt supported Iraq in its war against Iran, and the two countries have also engaged in a bitter feud over the Egyptian POW's held in Tehran. [passage omitted]

Israel will probably decline Ghali's or the Security Council's involvement in the Middle East conflict. It has been a standing, firm Israeli position that that international organization should be kept out of anything relating to the Middle East conflict.

Drunken UN Soldier 'Almost Caused Massacre'

Fired Machine Gun at Elat

AU2411151691 Vienna ORF Teletext in German 1453 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] An obviously drunk Austrian soldier almost caused a massacre in Elat on the Red Sea (Israel).

The 21-year-old private is a member of the UN troops on the Golan Heights. He entered an Israeli army base during a recreational stay in Elat, jumped on an armored vehicle, and fired several salvos with a machine-gun mounted on this vehicle. Nobody, fortunately, was hit. The machine-gun jammed after a short time and the soldier was arrested.

The Defense Ministry in Vienna, meanwhile, confirmed the incident which happened on 22 November.

Officers Disciplined for Incident

TA2411194291 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] An officer with the rank of major will be tried and the commander of the regional brigade was reprimanded by the commander of the Southern Command, in light of conclusions reached by the officer appointed to investigate a UN soldier's infiltration into an IDF [Israel Defense Forces] base in Elat.

The investigating officer said that the soldiers on guard duty at the time acted according to the rules, but were not sufficiently alert. It was decided to tighten the regulations governing security at the site in the wake of the conclusions. The remand of the UN soldier, Ishma'il Taubman, 21, of Austria, was extended today for another four days by the Elat Magistrate's Court. He was accused of entering a military area, harming state security, and firing in an area that is not a shooting range. Out correspondent Yehudit Silberstein reports that the legal adviser of the UN Interim Force in Lebanon [UNIFIL] asked to have the soldier transferred to UNIFIL after making a commitment that he would be tried and punished according to what is acceptable in Israel.

Foreign Ministry Director To Visit PRC

TA2311205291 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Hebrew 1900 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Ministry Director General Yosef Hadas will leave for the PRC in the next few days at the official invitation of the PRC Government. The visit is to be the culmination of the rapprochement between the two countries. Our political correspondent Gadi Sukenik reports that the delay in the visit stems from the fact that Hadas is in charge of two of Israel's teams for peace talks with the Arabs. The uncertainty regarding the date for peace the talks has for the moment postponed Hadas' departure for the PRC.

Academic Cooperation Pacts Signed With PRC

TA2511100991 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] Israeli and Chinese academic institutions have signed cooperation agreements. The Medical School of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem will conduct an exchange program of researchers and students with its counterpart in Chengdu, China. The Hebrew University's Truman Institute has signed a similar accord with the Institute for Peace and Development in Shanghai.

Attorney General Said Undecided on 'Ashrawi Trial

TA2411113391 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 24 Nov 91 p 5

[ITIM report]

[Text] The Justice Ministry spokeswoman firmly denied reports on Qol Yisra'el on Friday that Attorney General Yosef Harish had reached a decision not to press criminal charges against Hanan 'Ashrawi for meeting with PLO personnel.

Spokeswoman Eti Eshed emphasized that since State Attorney Dorit Beinisch submitted the investigation file on 'Ashrawi, Harish has made no decision on the matter.

Government Invited to Peace Talks in Washington

NC2211220491 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 2015 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz stated that the Lebanese Government this morning received a U.S.-Soviet proposal to resume negotiations in Washington on 4 December.

Buwayz said this proposal came as a compromise, since Israel had asked that the negotiations be resumed at a location near the negotiating countries, while the Arab parties suggested that the venue be away from the region. Buwayz pointed out that Lebanon has not yet made a decision on the U.S.-Soviet proposal, noting that a decision will be made in the next few days.

Turning to another issue, the foreign minister pointed out that the multilateral talks might be held somewhere else.

Buwayz said Lebanon's position on the negotiations reflected its absolute commitment first to the mechanism and terms of the peace conference and second, to the principle of solidarity and coordination among the Arab parties. Buwayz did not expect immediate or early results from the bilateral negotiations. He noted that good chances for reaching results will appear in the medium- or long-term.

Buwayz Comments Further

NC2311142391 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Lebanon has received a U.S. message specifying 4 December as the date for resuming the Arab-Israeli bilateral talks in Washington. Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz, who received the message from his U.S. counterpart James Baker, told the Voice of Lebanon that the choice of date and venue was made after intensive consultations with several parties. He asserted that holding the negotiations in Washington will provide the Arabs with the support that they always have requested. He added that Lebanon does not object to holding the talks at that venue. Here is a recording of what the foreign minister said:

[Begin recording] [Unidentified correspondent] Your Excellency, when and how did you get the invitation to attend a peace conference in Washington on the fourth of next month?

[Buwayz] Mr. Crocker, the U.S. ambassador to Lebanon, yesterday conveyed to me a message from Secretary Baker specifying the venue of the bilateral meetings. It has been decided that Washington will be the venue and that the talks will begin on 4 December. Certainly this choice was made following intensive consultations with several parties. As you know, the Israelis wanted the negotiations to be held close at hand in the Middle East. We proposed holding them in a European capital, or perhaps Washington. We do not object to Washington. Holding the talks there provides the Arabs the support that they always have requested, meaning an intensive and high- level representation by the two superpowers. Therefore, we do not object to holding them there.

[Correspondent] Mr. Minister, have we agreed to attend? Who will chair the Lebanese delegation?

[Buwayz] Naturally the delegation that will participate in these talks this time will be somewhat different than the original delegation. Every stage of talks has a certain character. There is going to be no single delegation for all the talks. Several experts will be included in the delegation according to the needs and the issues which will be raised at each stage. The delegation for the upcoming stage has not been set. It certainly will be formed before 4 December so that it will be able to participate in these talks.

[Correspondent] Will be it headed by an ambassador?

[Buwayz] That is not necessary. [end recording]

Receives Clarifications From Baker

NC2311110791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1015 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has received a message from U.S. counterpart James Baker containing clarifications on the invitation to hold bilateral talks in Washington on 4 December.

Foreign Ministry Secretary General Ambassador Suhayl Shammas received Soviet Ambassador Gennadiy Ilichev, who announced after the meeting that so far no agreement has been reached on the time and place for Arab-Israeli negotiations. He expected agreement to be reached on this issue within the next few days. Ilichev said: Our task is to help the concerned sides, not to impose decisions or solutions on the Arab and Israeli parties.

Responding to a question on the possibility of resuming talks in Moscow, he said: We are studying the subject and will discuss it with the Arabs and Israel. But so far, no final decision has been taken on the second stage of the peace conference.

Army Official To Head Peace Talks Team

TA2311202491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] A senior Army man will head the Lebanese delegation to the bilateral talks with Israel in Washington. This was reported by Lebanese sources in Europe to our correspondent Gid'on Kouts.

The new chairman, whom the sources did not name, will replace the delegation head for the Madrid talks, who resigned officially from his post over Israel's military activity and the killing of civilians in southern Lebanon. The sources reported that in the end Lebanon will show up for the talks in Washington.

'Indirect' Agreement With Israel Proposed

NC2211140091 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Diplomatic circles have cited U.S. Ambassador in Lebanon Ryan Crocker as saying that the U.S. Administration has proposed to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Shamir some kind of indirect agreement between Lebanon and Israel. The agreement stipulates, AL-LIWA' says, a halt to all military operations in the south on the condition that the Lebanese Army extends its deployment to control all fronts in return for the Lahd militia's withdrawal from Jazzin and the halting of Israeli attacks on the south.

Al-Asad Phones al-Hirawi on al-Ta'if, 425

NC2311123091 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad today telephoned President Ilyas al-Hirawi, expressing the hope that Lebanon would implement all al-Ta'if accord clauses and UN Resolution 425.

Karami Denies News of Possible Resignation

NC2211123491 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 1145 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] A dispute involving a matter of protocol took place at the military parade today, highlighting the divisions among the government's top officials. Prime Minister 'Umar Karami has just denied an earlier report that he threatened to resign from the government. But what actually has happened?

According to reports, a dispute evolved during the military parade in Jadat 'Abdallah al-Yasi [museum area of Beirut]. Prime Minister Karami arrived at the review stand but was not given a military salute. The prime minister became visibly angry and made a few comments in front of journalists, giving the impression that he intends to resign. It seems, however, that subsequent consultations have defused the tension. Karami was seen smiling afterward at an Independence Day reception in which he took part together with President Ilyas al-Hirawi and Chamber of Deputies Speaker Husayn al-Husayni. The three top officials appeared to be on good terms and were smiling at each other.

Dispute 'Not Yet Over'

NC2311171791 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Prime Minister 'Umar Karami spoke to the Voice of Lebanon on the *Saturday Salon* program today about proposed and pending issues. He discussed yesterday's protocol dispute which led to his threat to resign. The dispute is not yet over and will be referred to the cabinet on Tuesday.

Prime Minister Karami touched on administration and finance, military service, developments in the south, Resolution 425, and bilateral negotiations. He said: We do not claim to have reached the end of the road successfully, but what counts is achieving the principle of separating powers.

The prime minister said that military service is a national duty and added that things must be rectified in the armed forces. Karami said there is an imbalanced community representation in the armed forces, with few Christian volunteers. He said that when a person is summoned he can either pay a lump sum or complete military service. Some 10,000 people will be chosen, and payment will not be made before the draft.

The prime minister maintained that stands are identical on bilateral negotiations. He emphasized that the government will pursue the diplomatic method in international organizations. He said: We believe that the peace conference is a form of dispute with Israel, to make it leave Lebanon. Karami emphasized that Lebanon will never deal separately on peace, and that it will implement what the president pledged the U.S. President on safeguarding security on the southern borders when Israel withdraws, but not before Resolution 425 is implemented.

Prime Minister Karami addressed yesterday's protocol problem.

[Begin Karami recording] There is a background that must be mentioned so that we can understand what has happened. Some people objected to holding independence day celebrations in these difficult times and while there is tragedy in the south, where destruction and displacement occur daily. Our view was that there must be a celebration to confirm our insistence that there is independence, to preserve our heritage and history, and to pay tribute to the heroes of independence, who gave much for Lebanon to achieve its independence, sovereignty, freedom, progress, and prosperity. So, it was decided to hold an independence day celebration.

The three top leaders received the celebration program from the Defense Ministry, and the chief of protocol appraised me of its contents. We were surprised by the reception planned for the prime minister and the speaker of the Chamber of Deputies. Contacts with Speaker al-Husayni established that we held the same stand.

After consultations, and as head of the executive authority, I told the defense minister that the program was unacceptable and that it would have to be amended. The president heads the country and must be treated as a program stipulates, while the chamber speaker and the prime minister head two institutions and have their distinguished roles. Their reception cannot be the same as that accorded any officer.

The program was amended to have a band playing and arms presented upon the arrival of the three top leaders. We do not much attend to formalities, but we want to

preserve the status and rights of the second republic's institutions. The program was amended and we were notified. When I arrived I was received by the defense minister, the Army commander, and officers. Just imagine the negligence, even in the reception committee. When we arrived they told us to face the flag. We did but there was nobody there to tell us what we to do. An officer whispered in my aide's ear that we should proceed to the platform. It was as if we had arrived at a funeral or a requiem. [end recording]

Karami added: We cannot keep quiet about this. Because it violates the Constitution and powers, we will raise the issue at Tuesday's cabinet meeting.

Al-Murr-al-Husayni Dispute Reported

NC2311071691 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 0530 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] According to informed sources, Independence Day celebrations took place at the Defense Ministry on 21 November with the president and the defense minister attending. Prime Minister Karami and Speaker al-Husayni were not invited to these celebrations, and they wondered why they were not included. They also were surprised at the political talk the defense minister made when he addressed the president, especially when he said: This is your army.

Political circles have interpreted this, proceeding from the defense minister's style, as an attempt to further entrench hegemony and manifest the president's command of the Army. The al-Ta'if accord, which stipulates that the president is the supreme commander of the Armed Forces, placed the Army under the Council of Ministers' authority because it stipulated that the council is the authority over the Armed Forces. The president's command of the Army, therefore, is symbolic.

This was part of the reason the problem was aggravated and led to a request for Defense Minister Michel al-Murr to report to the home of the Chamber of Deputies' speaker in order to remind al-Murr of his stands and violations.

Minister al-Murr then reminded al-Husayni of [former President] Amin al-Jumayyil, how he used to organize the officers' working meetings, address them, and so on. Al-Murr believes what he did was natural. The response to al-Murr's stands was harsh, and he was told: Where is Amin al-Jumayyil and where are his practices, and what has happened to the Army now? In addition, the al-Ta'if agreement is what governs behavior and relations today.

'Border Strip Officials' Said Behind Bombing

NC2311105491 (Clandestine) Radio Free Lebanon in Arabic 0945 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Correspondent Amal Ilyas report on a news conference held by Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib; place not given]

[Text] Four principal leads have been reached in the investigation into the explosion of College Hall at the American University of Beirut [AUB].

According to what Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib said, these four leads are:

—One of the perpetrators of the operation, called Khalid al-Khalil, has been arrested and the car used in the explosion has been identified.

—The death of the girl Hayat al-Khalil, who was a principal link in the clues.

—Three other members of the ring have been identified, according to descriptions given by the detained man in addition to his confession, which was made without coercion and which is one of the most important links.

—The withdrawal of funds in U.S. dollars from one of Beirut's banks.

At the news conference he held this morning, the interior minister said that the case is now up to the judiciary, specifically Judge As'ad Diyab, to continue the investigations and issue the final indictment.

On those behind the explosion, Minister al-Khatib said that the investigation shows that the act was carried out on the instructions of border strip officials. He added: That is what the defendant has confessed to. There are tangible clues here. The girl who took part in the act used to visit the border strip constantly, was an AUB student, and had four cards allowing her to drive her car on to the campus.

The minister called on journalists not to publish any additional information in order to safeguard the investigation.

Minister Says Israel Implicated in AUB Blast

NC2311110491 Paris AFP in English 1025 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Beirut, Nov 23 (AFP)—Israel was implicated in the November 8 blast at the American University of Beirut (AUB) that left one dead and caused serious damage, Lebanese Interior Minister Sami al-Khatib charged Saturday.

General al-Khatib disclosed at a press conference that police had arrested one of the perpetrators of the blast.

The suspect had confessed to having acted on "orders from officials" in the Israeli-declared "security zone" in southern Lebanon that is jointly controlled by Israeli troops and allied Lebanese militiamen, the interior minister said.

Giving what he called initial results of an investigation, he declined to specify if the orders came from the militia or the Israeli Army itself.

The interior minister had blamed Israel immediately after the blast. "I accused Israel out of intuition. Today, given the progress in the investigation, I maintain this argument," he told reporters.

Khatib said a young man from southern Lebanon, Jihad al-Khalil, [name as received] "an experienced agent of intelligence agencies", had given himself up to police, saying he carried out the attack together with his sister and three other accomplices.

A car packed with 80 kilograms (175 pounds) of explosives blew up, fatally wounding a university employee who was buried under rubble, and destroying an administrative building.

Iran To Resolve Hostage Issue To Help Syria

NC2411123691 (Clandestine) Voice of the People in Arabic to Lebanon 1130 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Sources in Beirut who are close to Iran have disclosed to REUTER that Iran hopes that the separation of the fate of the Western hostages in Lebanon from the fate of the Arab detainees in Israel will end the hostages problem quickly and improve ties with Europe.

The sources said that Iran is opposed to the peace talks but that it appreciates Syria's firm position. The sources said that Iran is aware that Syria had no other option but to take part in the talks. Iran, the sources say, helped ease the hostage crisis in Lebanon to enhance Syria's position and to prevent Washington from rewarding Israel by supporting it at the peace talks. The sources said that Syria can exploit its good ties with the United States to confront Israel's intransigent position.

Fadlallah Sermon Calls For Release of Hostages

NC2211193691 Paris AFP in English 1836 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Excerpt] Beirut, Nov 22 (AFP) - The spiritual leader of Lebanese Muslim fundamentalists added his voice Friday to calls for the release of the last Western hostages on humanitarian grounds.

"One way or another, the hostages' file must be closed for humanitarian reasons, and for certain political reasons. And it seems that it will be closed," Shaykh Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah said at a Muslim prayer session. [passage omitted]

Government Protests Israeli al-Biqa' Attacks

NC2311151991 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Lebanon has filed a new complaint with the UN Security Council protesting Israel's attacks against its southern areas. Ambassador Khalil Makkawi, head of the permanent Lebanese mission to the United Nations, said that Lebanon has called on the UN Security Council to take a firm stand on the Israeli attacks against Lebanon's south and western al-Biqa' which contravene international norms and conventions.

Israelis, 'Lahd Militia' Shell Southern Villages

NC2211131591 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1230 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] REUTER reports that the Israeli occupation forces and Lahd militia bombarded villages adjacent to the occupied strip this morning. Local security sources said more than 40 shells fell on villages in Iqlim al-Tuffah District.

Resistance Blows Up Lahd Militia Building

NC2311105191 (Clandestine) Voice of the Mountain in Arabic to Lebanon 1000 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] National resistance fighters detonated an explosive device in an Agent Lahd militia building at Bisri Crossing in Jazzin district at 0715 today.

The Lebanese National Resistance Front said that the Martyr Mahdi Makkawi group infiltrated to the crossing at dawn today, planting a highly explosive device on the roof of a room occupied by militiamen. The explosion destroyed the building, killing or wounding personnel manning the post. Two ambulances removed the dead and wounded while Agent Lahd militiamen raked the area with tank and heavy-caliber machine gun fire. The group's members returned to base safely.

Communist Action Claims Bombing of Lahd Position

NC2311174091 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] In the south, the Communist Action Organization issued a statement claiming responsibility for today's attack against agent Lahd's forces.

The organization said that a group of its fighters detonated an explosive charge on top of a building near a position of the agents close to the Jazzin Bridge. Agent Lahd's radio [Voice of the South] admitted that the explosion led to the death of a Lahd militiaman and a civilian, and to the injury of two Lahd militiamen and another civilian. Following the explosion the agent militia shelled Sidon.

Afghanistan

USSR Speeding Up Recall of Military Advisers

BK2211172091 Hong Kong AFP in English 1714 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Kabul, Nov 22 (AFP)—The Soviet Union, which aims to end its military backing of the government of President Najibollah here, has speeded up its withdrawl of combat experts from war-torn Afghanistan, diplomatic sources said Friday.

The recall of some 300 military advisors, including experts operating surface-to-surface Scud missiles and training Afghan Army personnel in their use, was being expedited, a Soviet diplomatic source told AFP here.

"We are speeding up things," the source said amid reports that Moscow planned to totally withdraw its personnel before January 1, the deadline set for the Soviets and the United States to respectively stop arms shipments to the Afghan Government and the mojahedin resistance.

The Soviet advisors and experts were leaving by Antonov [An] transporters with their gear instead of in the giant Ilyushin cargo planes which shuttle between Moscow and Kabul daily, other sources said.

They said the four-engined Antonovs, each with a capacity to carry 60 passengers, were being pushed in as the other larger Soviet planes were returning packed with export material from Afghanistan and did not have space to carry personnel.

At least two An-12's left Kabul on Thursday and there were more such flights from the capital's military airport Friday, but it was not known how many advisors had left for the Soviet Union.

A Soviet Embassy spokesman here declined to disclose the number of experts left behind after 115,000 soldiers were repatriated from Afghanistan in February 1989.

The advisers' withdrawal began earlier this month. Moscow is also gradually reducing arms supplies to the Kabul government.

Rebels Repel Government Attack in Balkh Province

BK2311150491 Hong Kong AFP in English 1451 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 23 (AFP)—Afghan mojahedin have repulsed attacks by government forces in Balkh Province, suffering casualties of 30 killed and 200 wounded, the resistance said Saturday.

Fighting has continued in the area bordering on the Soviet Union for the past four days while Kabul forces tried to recapture the district of Dowlatabad "liberated" by the mojahedin on November 7, the rebel MIDIA [MEDIA INFORMATION DEPARTMENT OF ISLAMIC AFGHANISTAN] news agency said.

The agency, quoting a wireless message from the district, said the government forces had suffered heavier casualties, but gave no numbers.

Two government aircraft supporting the ground forces were shot down by mojahedin gunners, MIDIA said.

The mojahedin, who control large parts of Afghanistan, are fighting to oust Afghan President Najibollah and establish an Islamic government in the country.

The Soviet Union, which withdrew its troops from Afghanistan in 1989 after nearly 10-years of military intervention, held its first direct talks with the rebels when a mojahedin delegation visited Moscow between November 11-15.

A joint statement issued after the talks said the Soviet Union agreed to the establishment of an interim Islamic government in Kabul until elections supervised by the United Nations and the Organization of Islamic Conference were held.

The Moscow talks have generally been regarded as strengthening peace hopes raised by mojahedin acceptance of a U.N. plan for a political settlement and the joint U.S.-Soviet decision to stop arms shipments to the warring sides from January.

The U.N. blueprint, announced in May, calls for inter-Afghan dialogue to establish an interim administration in Kabul pending the elections.

Najibollah Discusses Elections, Ending War

AU2211155291 Prague LIDOVE NOVINY in Czech 21 Nov 91 pp 1, 5

[Interview with President Najibollah by correspondents Jaromir Stetina and Jan Mihalicek in Kabul; date not given: "Soviet Troops Are History"]

[Text] Afghan President Dr. Najibollah granted an interview to LIDOVE NOVINY reporters in Kabul on the day when the talks between Soviet and Russian state representatives on the one side and the mojahedin on the other ended.

[LIDOVE NOVINY] The third anniversary of the Soviet troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan is approaching. What is your retrospective view on the 10 years of the deployment of the Soviet Army in your country?

[Najibollah] We call the period after the Soviet troops' withdrawal from Afghanistan the period of defending the country's independence. Despite continuing interference, increasing aggression, and enemy intrigues against Afghanistan, the Afghan Republic's armed forces were able to defend the country's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity, and the achievements of the policy of national consensus over this period. As far as the period of the Soviet troops' presence on our territory is concerned, we can say that that is history. We are looking ahead, and every Afghan yearns for peace.

[LIDOVE NOVINY] In your opinion, what steps should be taken to end the war in Afghanistan?

[Najibollah] In order to stop the war in Afghanistan, interference in Afghanistan's internal affairs by neighboring countries—Pakistan, above all—should be stopped.

The war interferes with the life of many Afghans, both at home and abroad. This is why they would welcome a quick end to the devastating war. If foreign interference in our internal affairs ends, those who succumbed to foreign pressures will think about what is beneficial to the country and the people, rather than about what benefits them personally, their group, or their party. They will respond better to the demands of the times and to the Afghan Republic's and UN proposals. They will take their place at the table to discuss and hold a dialogue on Afghan internal matters. I am positive that Afghans are capable of solving anything at the negotiating table.

[LIDOVE NOVINY] How will the moratorium on arms supplies by the United States and the Soviet Union influence the so-called negative symmetry? Will the treaty prevent a third party from delivering weapons to Afghanistan?

[Najibollah] The decision made by the United States and the Soviet Union to end arms deliveries to the Afghan Republic and the Afghan opposition is an important step toward ending the war and achieving peace. This step can help end the war if other countries who arm the opposition take a similar step, and if the UN monitors whether this moratorium is observed.

If other countries, particularly Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, continue delivering arms or even participating directly in the war, then we may be sure that the war will continue.

[LIDOVE NOVINY] In your opinion, when will free and democratic elections be held in Afghanistan?

[Najibollah] We have been suggesting for a long time that elections be held and that a government acceptable to all levels of our society, to Afghans at home and abroad, be established. Free, secret, direct, and general elections, in which everyone has the same chance of winning, must be held under the auspices of the United Nations. We even suggested that experimental elections be held in some parts of the country controlled by both the Afghan Republic and the opposition.

We can state with pleasure that the essence of our plan for elections found its reflection in the five-point plan by the UN secretary general for a political settlement of the Afghan problem. It must be said that it is up to the Afghans to determine the date of elections.

[LIDOVE NOVINY] The Afghan mojahedin are currently holding talks in Moscow. How can this, in your opinion, contribute to the peaceful solution of the Afghan problem?

[Najibollah] The Afghan Republic's government welcomes any discussion or dialogue contributing to ending the war and ensuring a permanent national reconciliation. No demands should be set in advance of such talks. We invite a dialogue on any level. Positive results can only be achieved, however, if personal views are not pushed through. Let us put it this way: Afghans are emphasizing the importance of any talks that lead to national unity and solidarity. This is how we want to eliminate the disputes that arose as a result of foreign conspiracy during the war years.

Senate Issues Statement on Mojahedin-USSR Talks

LD2011195291 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 20 Nov 91

[Statement issued by the Senate House of the Meli Shura of the Republic of Afghanistan following the joint declaration in Moscow at the end of the visit by a mojahedin delegation—read by announcer]

[Text] In the name of God, the merciful, the compassionate.

Dear compatriots, a delegation of part of the Afghan mojahedin spoke with the Soviet authorities for the first time on 10 November in order to find a political solution [to the situation in the country]. The Senate session of the Republic of Afghanistan considers this act, as far as coinciding with the contents of the five-point statement issued by the UN secretary general, to be a good thing and considers it the beginning of dialogue between Afghans, which is the main and realistic means toward the salvation of Afghans from this dreadful tragedy.

The Senate of Afghanistan responsibly and actively represents the will of the Afghan people—that is, the whole of Afghanistan—and is completely confident that these negotiations—if pursued in good faith on the basis of the principles of the holy Koran, on the tenets of Islam, on the firm and realistic base of the five-point statement of the UN secretary general, and if they are extended to and commenced with all Afghan political and national forces—prepare the way for the free will of the people of Afghanistan and will undoubtedly bear fruit, which is something hoped for by all Afghans. It will put an end to this tragedy of our homeland.

The senate of Afghanistan, in its plenary session of 18 November, discussed the statement of the Afghan Government dated 16 November, which was issued in response to the 15 November statement of the Afghan opposition delegation and the Soviet authorities. After discussions, it issued the following resolution:

The session of the Senate of the Afghan Meli Shura, in order to put an end to the fratricidal war and to implement the policy of national reconciliation based on the foundation of intra-Afghan understanding, supports the statement of the Republic of Afghanistan dated 16 November. The formation of a government of national

unity including all Afghan forces is based on the principle that Afghanistan is an independent, united, and undivisible Islamic country, that national sovereignty belongs to the people of Afghanistan, and that it considers the will of the people ahead of anything else.

The Senate session of the Republic of Afghanistan, in completely confirming the Geneva accords, the UN secretary general's statement of 21 May, and the joint Soviet-U.S. statement concerning the cessation of sending arms, asks all belligerent sides to take steps to peacefully resolve the question of Afghanistan through negotiations with each other to put an end to the 13 years of war. All should observe international justice and law.

The Senate House, for the purpose of achieving nationwide peace in Afghanistan, and as a free and UN member state, asks the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Nations, the ICO—in particular the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and Saudi Arabia—and all peace-loving people to consider the legitimate demands of the republic and people of Afghanistan during negotiations on maintaining and consolidating peace and stability so that the 13 years of war, destruction, and suffering can come to an end.

Success comes from God.

Government Takes 'Urgent' Antifamine Measures

LD2311180591 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] The prime minister's press office reports to BAKHTAR that to help the deserving compatriots, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has taken urgent measures to send 47 million afghanis worth of wheat, cloth, clothing, medicine, and footwear to the families in the central regions of the country, and has put these measures into effect.

Based on an instruction by the prime minister's office, the Department of Preparations for and Campaigns Against Disasters of the Council of Ministers and other relevant bodies have taken a series of measures to provide, transport, and distribute 204 tonnes of wheat worth 35 million afghanis.

The Department of Preparations for and Campaigns Against Disaster has prepared 5,000 metres of material worth 5 million afghanis, 1,000 blankets worth 2 million afghanis, and 1,000 items of clothing and 1,000 pieces of footwear worth 2 million afghanis for the suffering families. These are ready to be sent to the central regions.

Afghanistan's Red Crescent [Afghani Sera Miasht] has provided and prepared 30 items of medicine and medical equipment worth 30 million afghanis to assist the people of the central regions. These are ready to be transported.

According to another report by the prime minister's press office, in line with the state measures and special instructions that are issued to the relevant authorities to help the people of the central regions, a series of working measures has also been taken. Among them, the Department of Preparations for and Campaigns Against Disaster has opened account No 9212 at the Pashtani Tajarati Bank for the participation of religious, Muslim, and capable compatriots, especially local businessmen, private entrepreneurs, and local and international organizations to aid the people of the central region of the country.

In accordance with the instruction of the prime minister's office, urgent intensive measures are under way to carry out the transportation and distribution of aid goods to the central regions by private sector transportation and other departments and establishments.

India

Foreign Minister, U.S. Official Hold Talks

BK2311095691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] The United States has appreciated India's viewpoint that abetment to terrorists by Pakistan has led to tensions and has a major impact on the security situation in the region. This was indicated by the U.S. under secretary of state for international security affairs, Mr. Reginald Bartholomew, during his talks with External Affairs Minister Mr. Madhav Singh Solanki in New Delhi yesterday. He said he had direct talks with the Pakistan authorities during his recent visit to Islamabad and urged them not to provide any aid to terrorism. Mr. Bartholomew said he heard the Pakistani viewpoint on Jammu and Kashmir and underlined that the matter be resolved bilaterally under the Simla agreement.

Mr. Solanki gave an account of the recent visit of Mr. Shaharyar Khan as the special envoy of the prime minister of Pakistan. He said Pakistani support to terrorists in Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir is not conducive to the confidence-building measures to improve bilateral relations. Mr. Solanki told the U.S. under secretary that New Delhi is still waiting for ground action by Pakistan as per the assurances given by Mr. Shaharyar Khan.

A spokesman said the talks also covered the chemical weapons and the Nonproliferation Treaty for a nuclear-free zone. The Indian side expressed their position and reservation on both the matters.

Regarding the sale of a nuclear reactor to Iran, the U.S. under secretary was informed that the discussions are still at a preliminary stage. He was also assured that New Delhi will take into account the U.S. concern in the matter.

Spokesman Discusses Reactor Sale

BK2211142891 Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English 1034 GMT 22 Nov 91

["Spokesman's Statement in Response to a Question on Sale of Nuclear Reactor to Iran and Visit of Mr. Barthlomew 20/11/91"]

[Text] In response to a question as to whether during EAM's [external affairs minister's] visit to Iran Iranians formally put up a requisition for a nuclear reactor, spokesman said "during EAM's visit to Tehran for joint commission meeting, several areas of economic cooperation were discussed, many of these in great detail. On question of nuclear cooperation, a lot has already been written in considerable detail. But I would like to categorically affirm that there was no discussion whatsoever on this subject when EAM was in Tehran."

In response to a question as to whether Bartholomew will be bringing any specific proposals to discuss and whether there was any truth in press reports that India was being pressurised by United States, spokesman said Bartholomew is coming to us after having been with James Baker in China. He has been to Pakistan also. We are greatly looking forward to his arrival and to an exchange of views with him on his visits to these countries and our expanding bilateral relations with United States. As you know, in recent times, there have been a number of visits exchanged between United States and India at various levels—civil and military. And it is in spirit of this new and widening relationship that we would be welcoming Bartholomew. We would be talking as two countries who have most friendly relations. We would approach our dialogue with an open mind and we would be guided in our discussions by the fact that we are two sovereign, independent, democratic countries.

World Atomic Energy Head Comments

BK2211115891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1018 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] New Delhi, Nov 22 (AFP)—The proposed sale of an Indian nuclear research reactor to Iran is not a cause of concern to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the group's director general Hans Blix said here Friday.

Blix told a press conference here that Iran had signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and that aquiring the 10-megawatt reactor could not lead to proliferation as long as the IAEA safeguards applied.

The possible sale of the reactor was expected to figure prominently in talks here Friday between visiting U.S. Undersecretary of State for International [Security] Affairs Reginald Bartholomew and Indian officials.

Washington has voiced strong objections to the deal, negotiations for which Indian officials insist are only in the preliminary stages, and has twice called in India's ambassador to the U.S. to make its views known.

U.S. State Department spokesmen have said they fear the reactor could be "misused" in light of a recent Iranian call for Islamic countries to aquire nuclear weapons to counteract Israel's capability.

Blix, who said he has been on a private visit here for the past week, also said that at no time during his visit had he suggested India sign the NPT.

He clarified that the IAEA Charter did not involve politics but only ensured that those countries which had signed the NPT "did not divert nuclear materials for weapons use."

He added it was "pure coincidence" that he and Bartholomew, who officials say is discussing nuclear concerns, including the possibility of New Delhi signing the NPT or agreeing to South Asia being declared a nuclear free zone, were here at the same time.

India, which exploded a nuclear device in 1974, is not a signatory to the NPT.

Government, U.S. Seek Talks on Nonproliferation

BK2311105091 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Defense analyst Dr. C. Rajamohan commentary]

[Text] The visit of the U.S. under secretary of state for international security affairs, Reginald Bartholomew, to New Delhi has initiated a very significant nuclear dialogue between India and the United States. Instead of talking to each other on nuclear issues, as has been the practice in the past, Washington and New Delhi now seem eager to pursue a purposeful dialogue on nonproliferation. The exchange of views have taken place in the context of a changing Indo-U.S. relationship. The past mistrust and suspicion have yielded place to a new openness and a new desire to expand the areas of cooperation.

Military cooperation between India and the United States has been set in motion, opening up unprecedented possibilities for Indo-U.S. strategic cooperation in the post-cold war world. Recent international developments have provided a new context for the exchange of views on arms control and nonproliferation. In the wake of the failed Soviet coup, the United States and the Soviet Union have begun a reverse arms race to dismantle nuclear weapons. The Gulf war has brought sharp focus on the dangers of the spread of mass destruction weapons in volatile and conflict-prone regions.

The Middle East peace process that kicked off to a start in Madrid in last month is now scheduled to discuss regional arms control, and worldwide there is a growing sentiment to strengthen the international regimes on nonproliferation. A major focus of the Indo-U.S. nuclear dialogue is clearly on the dangerous implications of the fact that Pakistan has acquired nuclear weapon capability. Pakistan's depreciative diplomacy of proposing a

nuclear-free zone while acquiring nuclear weapons now stands exposed. Both India and the United States have the common objective of preventing a nuclear arms race in the subcontinent. But clearly there is no agreement between the two on how to proceed toward that objective.

It is also apparent that avoidance of a war between India and Pakistan, given their nuclear capabilities, has become paramount international security objective on which India and the U.S. can cooperate. India and the United States also recognize the dangers of the spread of mass destruction weapons. As India has begun to emerge as an exporter of strategic technologies, it has become imperative for the two to coordinate policies on the prevention of proliferation. There is no doubt that India and the United States remain far apart on the utility of the nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, but that does not prevent a fruitful nuclear dialogue between the world's most powerful democracy and the most populous one.

Minister Requests U.S. Assistance on Trade Talks

BK2111044891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Nov 91

[Text] The commerce minister says India has asked the developed countries, particularly the United States, to respond favorably to New Delhi's initiative for the successful completion of the Uruguay round of GATT talks. He told the Indo-U.S. Joint Business Council in New Delhi that India has taken steps for the early and successful completion of the GATT negotiations. Mr. Chidambaram said the dispute over Indian patent laws in respect of pharmaceutical industries can be resolved if foreign drug companies produced the drugs patented in India at affordable prices. He expressed confidence that the rupee will be a convertible currency much before the target of three years.

Later, addressing a joint press conference, the leader of the visiting U.S. delegation, Mr. (Donald Candle) and the leader of the Indian delegation, Mr. Raunaq Singh, said that working groups should be set up to identify the bottleneck in the Indian economic policy. Mr. (Candle) said that India's economic policy liberalization over the past four months is quite impressive and if implemented speedily could attract four to five billion dollars of foreign investment in the next five to six years.

State Seeks Economic Achievements

BK2111065491 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 21 Nov 91

[A.K. Bhattacharya commentary]

[Text] The 14th meeting of the Indo-U.S. Joint Business Council which ended in New Delhi yesterday vindicated what the prime minister, Mr. P.V. Narasimha Rao, told his party colleagues earlier in the day. The prime minister said of late there is a sea of change in the attitude of those visiting India from foreign countries, and that the world had started looking at India with new respect. One clear unmistakable proof is that for the last several days functionaries of the Indian Government and Indian business leaders have been busy meeting a host of industry and official-level delegations from several parts of the world.

Last week a high-level team from the European Community came to New Delhi to hold talks with the Indian Government about what could be done to resolve the deadlocked Uruguay round talks. Soon after the German Government sent an official-level team headed by its economics minister, Mr. Moellemann. The German Government indicated that further aid to India would be contingent on India's liberalizing the economy. A restraint in India's defense expenditure was suggested but it was not made a condition for future aid. Similarly, the U.S. business delegation leader, Mr. (Dom Candle), welcomed the Indian Government's recent policy measures to liberalize the economy and encourage more foreign investment. The interesting thing is that the Indian economic ministers, particularly the finance and commerce ministers, namely Dr. Manmohan Singh and Mr. Chidambaram, took all these meetings seriously, made a sincere attempt to explain to foreign industry the new policies, and invited them to invest in India.

In the last few months of the Narasimha Rao government, a conscious attempt has been made to globalize the Indian economy. The prime minister himself led a delegation, including some industrialists, to Germany about two months back. He would again go to France, and to Caracas in Venezuela to attend the Group of 15 summit next week. In this case also he is taking a team of Indian industrialists with him. The finance minister attended the World Bank and the IMF meeting in Bangkok last month, in addition to attending seminars on investing in India in Singapore.

The objective of the Indian Government is clear. The country needs more foreign investment. The recent spread of visits of foreign delegates, the frequency of meetings of the various joint business councils, and the Indian Government's functionaries desire to interact with prospective foreign investors to show that the Indian economy is slowly but steadily gearing up to take its rightful place in the global economy.

Jewish Official Holds Talks With Prime Minister

BK2211061591 Hong Kong AFP in English 1723 GMT 21 Nov 91

[By Anil Penna]

[Text] New Delhi, Nov 21 (AFP)—India is finally showing signs that it is ready to join a changing world and shed the animus it has harboured towards Israel for the 43 years the Jewish state has been in existence, a Jewish leader said.

Isi Leibler, the Australian co-chairman of the World Jewish Congress, said here Thursday after meeting

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao that New Delhi was making a "real review" of its frozen relations with Israel.

"I consider this prime minister more of a friend (of Israel's) than his predecessors," he told a news conference before flying to Singapore, the next stop on a trip which will take him to Manila, Bangkok, Tokyo and Seoul.

"I do feel he is more liberal in matters affecting Israel. I don't think he has any emotional negative vibes towards Israel," added Leibler, whose organisation serves as an umbrella group for world Jewry.

Leibler, 57, who heads a travel agency in Melbourne, said he was hopeful of positive change in India's policy of shunning Israel and substantial movement towards the establishment of full diplomatic ties.

Israel has no embassy in the Indian capital, although it maintains a consular office in Bombay. Israelis, even the approximately 35,000 of Indian origin, can only get visas to travel to India through third countries.

Leibler, however, hastened to add that the change of policy would take time to evolve, and cautioned against expectations of an immediate breakthrough.

"The principal hitch is that things in India take time," he said. "Change in policy is much more of a painful process here than elsewhere—that is India's political culture."

He said Indian governments traditionally tried hard to avoid polarisation on sensitive issues, explaining why the decision-making process was slow, but added that he could ascertain things changing very quickly.

"I am prepared at this stage of the game to wait and see what happens," Leibler said.

Indian officials had no immediate comment on Leibler's meeting with Rao, arranged through the good offices of Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans and U.S. Congressman Stephen Solarz.

Leibler related India's change of heart as much to Rao's "pragmatic" attitude as to change in the world, citing the recent Middle East peace conference in Madrid, the Soviet Union's decision to restore relations with Israel and a thaw in Israeli-Chinese relations.

The Belgian-born Jew, who moved to Australia at age three, met former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi nine months before she was assassinated in October 1984.

The visit, however, was a disaster, with Gandhi lecturing him on the virtues of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and a number of other issues. Leibler described it as a "traumatic, unhappy meeting."

In contrast, he said he enjoyed "the chemistry" with Rao, whom he described as an attractive, intelligent, cosmopolitan personality refreshingly shorn of political hypocrisy.

"We are living in a different world today than during Mrs. Gandhi's days," he said.

Leibler, a commander of the Order of the British Empire, never met Indira Gandhi's son and successor Rajiv, whom Rao succeeded as Congress (I) party leader at age 70 after the younger Gandhi was assassinated during an election campaign in May.

But Rajiv Gandhi, like his mother, harboured a bitter hatred towards Israel which he found difficult to shed, Leibler said, calling it a "hangup since 1948," when the Jewish state was founded.

At Thursday's meeting with Rao, Leibler said he discussed a "whole series of problems" relating to non-existent Indo-Israeli diplomatic relations.

"They have had a very bad relationship dating back to 1948. Even now India treats Israel like a pariah," he said he told Rao. "A new phase is called for.

"It does not mean India will necessarily have to support Israel on everything. But it can at least treat Israel no worse than it does Pakistan, with which it has been at war."

He said he told Rao that India would be lumped with Iraq and Libya if it did not change and be taken for granted by the Arabs while losing the sympathy of international groups, especially Jewish ones.

Leibler said he had urged Rao to raise the status of the Israeli consulate in Bombay to that of an embassy, review a government boycott of Israeli trade and help set up a bilateral cultural forum.

He said he also requested him to open a representative office in Tel Aviv to issue visas to Israelis of Indian origin, and allow the miniscule Jewish population of 6,000 in India telephonic contact with relatives in Israel—a facility they now lack.

Rao spoke plainly but his response was largely positive, said Leibler, who declined to detail specifics of Rao's response because Indian officials requested him not to, he said.

The Jewish leader said a litmus test of India's change of heart would be another United Nations General Assembly resolution stating that "Zionism is racism," which is expected to come up for a vote soon.

Liebler said he hoped India would vote against it.

Solanki Rules Out Israeli Shift

BK2311125891 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] The external affairs minister has ruled out any shift in policy toward Israel. Addressing the parliamentary consultative committee of his ministry, Mr. Madhav Singh Solanki said normalization of bilateral relations will depend on genuine progress in the settlement of the

West Asia problem. He said New Delhi has a consistent policy on diplomatic ties with Israel since its recognition by India.

Several issues, including Indo-Soviet relations, postponement of the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] summit, and Pakistan's proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone, were among the issues raised by members during the meeting. The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. Eduardo Faleiro, informed members that India is committed to the objective of the SAARC summit and looks forward to new dates for the summit.

Further on Solanki Comments

TA2411072491 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0600 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] The Indian foreign minister says that the normalization of ties between his country and Israel depends on concrete progress toward a settlement in the Middle East. He stated that Israel, whose approach to the peace process is inflexible, will have to amend its ways and take sincere action if it desires better ties with India.

Meanwhile, one of the World Jewish Congress leaders said after a meeting with the Indian prime minister last week that his impression from their talks was that New Delhi was considering revising its stand toward Israel.

State Seeks Direct Trade With Soviet Republics

BK2211092291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] India is to have direct trade contacts with the Soviet republics and Soviet enterprises. The commerce minister, Mr. P. Chidambaram, told the Lok Sabha that the move is aimed at imparting a new dynamism to bilateral trade. He admitted that the ongoing process of dismantling of physical and economic structure in the Soviet Union has had a negative impact on Indo-Soviet trade. The minister said that trade negotiations with the Russian Republic are likely to begin shortly.

In another reply, the commerce minister informed the members that the government is considering certain proposals for resumption of border trade with China.

Ties To Be Diversified

BK2311130291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] India has decided to take steps to diversify and expand its bilateral relations with different Soviet republics. The foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, told newsmen in New Delhi today that the prime minister, Mr. Narasimha Rao, has extended a personal invitation to the presidents of the four Soviet republics. These are Russia, Turkemenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kirghizia. A high-level team will be visiting Moscow shortly to work out separate agreements with the Soviet republics.

State To Open Republic Embassies

BK2311161391 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] India is to open ambassador-level missions in three Soviet republics of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Ukraine. The foreign secretary, Mr. Muchkund Dubey, told newsmen in New Delhi today that government has taken a decision in principle in this regard. To begin with, the present missions will be upgraded to the consulate level. He said India will be posting consul generals in two cities of the Russian Republic as a part of swift adjustment to the fast-changing situation in the Soviet Union. India has already accorded diplomatic recognition to the three independent Baltic states and concurrently accredited its ambassador in Poland to Lithuania, the envoy in Sweden to Estonia, and the ambassador in Finland to Latvia.

Replying to a question, the foreign secretary stated that a series of steps will be taken to diversify and expand bilateral relations with different Soviet republics. He disclosed that the prime minister has extended personal invitations to the presidents of four Soviet republics to visit India. These are the Republics of Russia, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan, and Kirghizia. A high-level team will be visiting the Soviet Union shortly to discuss arrangements for cooperation with various republics.

Finance Minister Discusses Foreign Loans

BK2211102291 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] The Lok Sabha today witnessed exchanges between the Treasury and opposition benches during question hour on the issue of the country's foreign loans. The minister of state for finance, Mr. Rameshwar Thakur, informed the house that India's loans as at the end of September this year stood at 134,000 crore rupees. He said the interest burden of these loans is 10 percent and compares well with any of the developing countries.

The finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, in his reply said it is not true that only the successive Congress-I governments had borrowed from foreign countries and institutions. He said the National Front government also quietly withdrew a part of the contingency finance from the IMF and pursued wrong policies like large-scale writing off of farmers' loans.

Dr. Singh also informed the house that the government has changed the external economic assistance policy by encouraging more direct investment instead of loans. He said developed countries and international financial institutions insist on loan funding arrangements with the less developed countries, but this adds to the interest burden and liabilities of these countries. Dr. Singh said the policy followed by successive governments to attract foreign assistance irrespective of loan with an interest

burden has now been reversed and the emphasis has been shifted by increasing the investment component in the assistance package.

Loans Taken Out Through Gold Pledging Repaid

BK2211130691 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1230 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] The government has announced that all the loans taken through the pledging of gold have been repaid and the gold now has become unencumbered. Making a suo moto statement in the Lok Sabha, the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh, said of the 47 tonnes pledged, 20 tonnes of confiscated gold will be transferred to the RBI [Reserve Bank of India]. He said that it has been decided to exercise the repurchase option in respect of the 20 tonnes of gold. This will be restored on the due dates of repurchase beginning from the 25th of this month till the 4th of next month.

Iran

Foreign Minister Leaves for 10-Day USSR Visit

LD2411170691 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Foreign Minister Velayati left for Moscow this afternoon to meet and confer with Soviet officials. During his 10-day trip to the Union of Soviet Republics [as heard], Mr. Velayati will be visiting six of the republics of that country and hold talks with their officials.

Musavi-Ardebili Urges Killing of Americans

LD2211175191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1130 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Second Friday prayers sermon by Ayatollah Musavi-Ardebili, acting Friday imam of Tehran, at Tehran University on 22 November—recorded]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] My fourth point concerns the present disastrous situation in the world. [passage omitted] Every day we face a fresh conspiracy. The world used to have two poles while today it has a single pole. I have heard one or two things I deem highly dangerous, hence our vigilance is needed. Now America has become the single pole, and it is perpetrating those acts which you have seen. The world is on the verge of becoming bipolar. With their unity not yet established, the Europeans are collaborating with a rival such as America; of this you are aware. One of the prerequisites for uniting with America, I have been told, is that of eradicating Islam. [passage omitted]

I received a piece of news from Brussels yesterday. It concerned seven or eight Islamic groups in Brussels, that is the capital of Belgium, who wanted to convene a session. As you are aware, permits were issued for those who said they were not Shiites—and the majority of them were not Shiites. A group of us told them that we were Shiites, hence we have been waiting for a long time, while they have resorted to delaying tactics, and it is still not clear whether they will give a permit or not, for the convention of this assembly or other such occasions. As for what I read in the newspapers—perhaps you have read them too—saying that Europeans should wage a crusade because Islam is once again coming to the surface. I asked a number of people whether Turkey is likely to enter the European Community or not. They said: Yes! it would like to enter it very much, but Europe does not accept it; they reject any nation, the majority of whom are Muslims, by resorting to all kinds of pretexts. Europeans say that the first condition is that there should be democracy, and Islam is not a democracy. Now sometimes they mention Islam and sometimes Shiism. Then they [not further specified] wrote that they will dismiss any Turkish officer from the Turkish Army whose wife wears a black chador, a head scarf, or anything else resembling Islamic hejab. They tell him he is not allowed to remain in the Army. That was Turkey, that was Spain, that was Brussels, that was America, and that is us. Our obligation is very heavy; it is extremely heavy. They said that Musavi-Ardebili has said in his Friday prayers: People, gather. You, Arab nations, kill—or whatever—the Arab governments. I have not made such a remark. What I said was something else. Now you have caused me to say it once again. I said: You people, you oppressed—whether Arab or non-Arab—do not wait for the actions of the governments [crowd chants "God is Great," "Death to America," "Death to Israel"] These governments are either mercenaries, lackeys, power-seekers, or similar. Do not pin your hopes on them. Kill only those whom I told you to kill, and those are the Americans. I did not mean the non-Americans. I also said: Do not wage a classic [preceding word in English] war. In a classic war, America brought disaster on Iraq, and now it has started its hue and cry and wants to take on Libya. They want to suppress all powers. At present we are unable to resist a uni-polar world; that is not possible. However, if the nations decided to rebel, and America sees that its agents are being kidnapped and arrested in Europe, in Africa, in Asia, and among the Arabs....[changes thought] That is why they are helpless. I promise you that they will not be able to cure this very soon. I am not saying they are unable to deliver a blow. They do deliver blows, but their blows will be ineffectual like their classic war. That is what I had said. After a week, I noticed that a Pakistani diplomat also said something else. He said: They started the crusade, but now they want us to kill each other. Hence, the only way left is for the people to stage a rebellion, to start a guerrilla war. I noticed that if I made such remarks, so did that man in Pakistan. I did not say kill the governments. Now it is up to them [not further specified]. They can do what they want, but what I said was that we, God willing, the Muslims... [sentence unfinished] It was the same in the early days of Islam. [passage omitted].

They expect us to be like them. We cannot be like them. We have a religion, a faith, the Koran, and we will not relinquish them. We will fight global blasphemy and arrogance, for as long as we have Islamic faith in our veins. [crowd chants "God is great," "Death to America," "Death to Israel"]

New U.S. 'Plots' Against Country Reported

NC2411184991 Tehran RESALAT in Persian 17 Nov 91 pp 1, 16

[Reza Sokhansanj editorial: "The U.S. Conspiracy"]

[Text] The United States extended the economic embargo against Iran last week, which has continued in effect since the outset of the victory of the Islamic revolution as one of the U.S. programs to exert pressure on the revolution.

In the past decade, the United States has used various kinds of pressure levers and miscellaneous forms of aggression against the Muslim Iranian nation. But in each instance, the massive popular backing of the system has forced it to retreat. Now, with the dismemberment of communism and the bipolar system, the United States is striving to reap massive political capital in the current circumstances.

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf war, the United States sought to pursue its most important objective—the policing of the region.

Following its military moves, intensive U.S. diplomatic moves were directed toward bringing Israel face to face with the Arab countries, which culminated in the U.S.-rigged conference. Following the consolidation of its military presence in the region, it embarked on compounding Israel's position in the Middle East, one of the results of which was the convocation of the Madrid conference.

The Islamic revolution denounced the Madrid conference and took steps to convene the conference in support of the Islamic revolution of Palestine in Tehran. This step infuriated the United States. Without any doubt, the Arab countries which decided to attend the Madrid conference—duped by false U.S. promises in the hope of receiving land for peace—soon realized that they had been greatly deceived. This indicates that surrendering to U.S. pressure brings nothing but massive losses.

It appears that U.S. political pressure against the Islamic Republic of Iran will be accelerated after a period of a cultural onslaught. The high-flying and fanciful U.S. objective is that the people should first become indifferent to defending the values of the system and the Islamic revolution and then a program of "inflicting a blow to the government" should be implemented.

Interference in Iran's internal affairs is part of this plan. In the past few days, the United States has harassed Iranian ships in the Persian Gulf, which indicates the domineering U.S. nature at this time.

Last week more than half of the U.S. senators, in a letter to the U.S. secretary of state, demanded that pressure be exerted on Iran for what they termed violations of human rights, people's freedoms, and summary arrests. This comes when the U.S. secretary of state is in the PRC and one of the issues during his talks is the alleged export of nuclear weapons to Iran.

The United States also has been perturbed over the Indian foreign affairs minister's recent visit to Iran. The State Department's higher echelons have had two meetings with the Indian ambassador in Washington on this matter, in case any agreement has been reached to export nuclear weapons!

The U.S. intervention in Iran's internal affairs is coming when inflation, a budget deficit, unemployment, crime, and social and cultural problems have surfaced in the country and U.S. intervention in other countries' affairs and its neglect of its domestic problems have aroused the people's dissatisfaction.

The United States and its allies now are stepping up pressure daily against the Islamic Republic of Iran in various guises because of the steadfast and firm stance of the Islamic Republic of Iran regarding Islamic values and the Palestinian uprising. They are trying to create a political dragnet.

It therefore is appropriate if we foil their current cultural plots within our country and do not allow the legacy of the great Imam and the pillars of our system to become tarnished in the name of democracy or the path to be paved for U.S. influence.

If foreign conspiracies and U.S. pressure on the one hand and the onslaughts against the pillars of the system on the other continue, most certainly the United States would be able to attain what it could not achieve in one decade. Only the presence and vigilance of the Muslim people of Iran can foil this plot at this crucial time.

Embassy in Paris Denies Role in Pan Am Bombing

LD2211174291 Tehran IRNA in English 1651 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Paris, Nov. 22, IRNA—The Iranian Embassy in a statement issued here Friday strongly rejected charges raised by "Zionist agents" that Tehran was involved in the 1988 bombing of a Pan-Am airliner over Scotland.

The statement was released after a report appeared in the Paris based daily LE FIGARO quoting Zionist press as blaming Iran for the incident.

LE FIGARO correspondent, quoting Zionist experts, has claimed that Iran paid dlrs [dollars] 10 million through an international bank based in Abu Dhabi to the People's Front for Liberation of Palestine-General Command to bomb the airliner.

It said the raising of such accusations by the agents of the Zionist regime was only aimed at tarnishing the image and prestige of the Islamic revolution before the world.

Possession of Nuclear Weapons Denied

LD2311084991 Hamburg DPA in German 1609 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Aachen (DPA)—Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Va'ezi says Iran has no nuclear weapons. "All other statements are deliberate lies and propaganda," the minister said in an interview with AACHENER VOLKSZEITUNG (Saturday edition) in Tehran. Iran supports the international struggle against atomic, biological, and chemical weapons. Va'ezi named Germany as one of the three most important trade partners of his country. He said contacts with the Federal Government are satisfactory. (The article was prereleased in an edited version.)

Final Group of Iraqi POW's Released

LD2211191591 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1530 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] With the release of 421 registered Iraqi POW's, the last batch of that country's POW's have been handed over to Iraqi officials.

With the release of these POWs, which took place at noon today, in the presence of Colonel (Ladzic), the UN representative, and representatives from our country's Foriegn Ministry, the Islamic Republic of Iran's work to release Iraqi POW's, in implementation of Article three of UN Security Council Resolution 598, ended today.

'Positive' Response Hoped For

LD2311123491 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] The Foreign Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran has expressed hope that following the release of a group of that country's POW's by Iran, the Iraqi Government would make a positive decision regarding the remaining Iranian POW's in Iraq, and assist the complete implementation of Article three of Resolution 598.

The Foreign Ministry announced: Yesterday, based on the Islamic Republic's promise to fully implement Article three of Resolution 598, in response to the call made by the secretary general of the United Nations, 421 of the registered Iraqi POW's were handed over to the authorities of that country at the Khosravi border crossing.

'Readiness To Return' Six Aircraft Reported

LD2411163391 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1447 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Kuwait, 24 Nov (KUNA)—Iranian Ambassador to Kuwait Hoseyn Sadeqi has expressed his country's readiness to return the six airplanes taken away and then flown to Iran by the Iraqi regime during its vicious occupation of Kuwait. In a statement to the paper 'SAWT AL-KUWAYT' published today, Sadeqi said that his country has showed readiness to return the airplanes through the United Nations. He stressed that there are no obstacles to this operation. He pointed out that an ad-hoc Kuwaiti delegation has visited the Islamic Republic of Iran to follow up this subject, and the UN delegate [not further specified] has held talks with Iranian officials in this respect, in accordance with international resolutions and regulations in force.

During its criminal invasion of Kuwait, the Iraqi regime seized 15 airplanes of various types which were stationed at the airport during the invasion. It flew them to Baghdad and then flew six of them to Iran.

Concerning relations between Iran and Kuwait, Sadeqi said that these relations were deep-rooted throughout history given that the two countries share the same creed, a common culture, and excellent neighborly relations. He further said: The post-Kuwait liberation period saw numerous visits by officials of the two countries during which they expressed their wish to promote these relations. He underlined that Iran's participation in extinguishing the Kuwaiti oil well fires and the trade agreement which will soon be concluded between the two sides are vivid examples of expanding the aspects of cooperation and relations between the two countries.

Sadeqi affirmed the his country's full readiness to take part in the reconstruction projects and restoring life in Kuwait. He pointed out that he has discussed these subjects with Kuwaiti officials, that they are now being studied, and that there are adequate areas of common work between the two countries.

Habibi on Dispatch of Food Aid to Afghanistan

LD2511110791 Tehran IRNA in English 0937 GMT 25 Nov 91

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 25, IRNA—First Vice-President and Government Spokesman Hasan Habibi here Monday said that Iran's recent measures to send foodstuff to Bamian province in Afghanistan and allowing the U.N. to send fuel to Iraq through the Iranian borders were part of Iran's humanitarian measures.

"Disputes with governments cannot force Iran to forbear sending relief aid to people in the neighbouring countries," Habibi told reporters at his weekly press conference.

On the last week election of Butrus Ghali of Egypt as the new U.N. secretary general, Habibi said,"A man from Africa has been elected but preparations should be made so that an Asian will be elected in the next term."

Habibi further added that according to an amendment to the budget bill for the next Iranian year 1971 (1992-93),

a special fund for unpredicted expenditures was due to be put at the disposal of the Ministry of Culture and Higher Education.

The fund, he noted, would be spent on expansion of higher education facilities, building of dormitories, and renovation of existing universities.

Bill To Join UN Convention on Narcotics Approved

LD2411114191 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Excerpt] The bill to join the UN convention on the fight against narcotics trafficking and hallucinogenic drugs was approved during today's open session of the Majles, chaired by Mr. Karrubi.

According to the report of our correspondent, on the basis of that single article bill, the government is permitted to join the United Nations convention and exchange documents, on condition that the contents of that convention do not contradict domestic and Islamic rules and regulations.

During today's open session the bill to add two clauses to the law pertaining to membership of the Islamic Republic of Iran in international organizations was also approved. [passage omitted]

Group of 77 Issues Tehran Declaration

LD2311191691 Tehran IRNA in English 1703 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 23, IRNA—A declaration issued at the end of the seventh ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 here today stressed, among other things, on the need for a determined move to bring in a new era of partnership for development among developed and developing countries. It said developing countries are ready to engage in a comprehensive dialogue on all issues affecting trade and development, including both international and national aspects, in a balanced discussion based on the imperatives of genuine interdependencee taking into account the weight and impact of developed and developing countries in the world economy.

The Tehran declaration said a dialogue towards a new partnership for development must be pragmatic and realistic, non-confrontational, based on a mutuality of interest, and above all aimed at achieving, through a gradual deepening of the international consensus on specific issues, concrete agreements that can be implemented. It said that dialogue must also lead to the establishment of mechanisms for follow-up on the action agreed upon and monitor the extent to which they are being carried out.

Adverting to challenges for developing countries it said the pursuit of economic efficiency by develping countries would, however, have to integrate the social, cultural, and development dimensions. Moreover, the realization of the full entrepreneurial potential available in the developing countries would require these countries to have better and favorable access to the global economic space. It added the developing countries recognize the crucial importance of economic cooperation among themselves as a means of enhancing their successful integration into an equitable international economy.

In this context, it said, they recognize the importance of consolidating and strengthening the global system of trade preferences (GSTP) and complementing it by appropriate trade financing measures, including the eventual establishment of an international trade financing facility backed by the international community. At the same time, it said, the process of regional and subregional cooperation and integration with the developing world should be consolidated and strengthened.

On the challenges to the developing countries it said they need a world economy operating on the basis of multilateral rules anchored in the respect of competition, open markets, equity and fair play. It said at the moment their exports are being discriminated against, and added "developed countries must commit themselves solemnly to a return to the agreed rules of the international economy while providing special and differential treatment to developing countries." It added the developing countries "must come forward in a spirit of cooperation, responsibility, imagination, and far-sightedness to complement and support the efforts of developing countries and to build an international environment which permits the realization of the creativity present in the cultures of the developing world.

It said the Group of 77 shall seek agreements, and corresponding actions, among other, on the following aspects:

- Taking account of growing interdependence, the strengthening of observance of multilateral rules with a view to creating better conditions for effective competition and equitable integration of developing countries in the world economy,

- Halting and rolling-back of all forms of protectionism by developed countries which prevent genuine international competition and result in harmful effects and economic losses for developing countries,

- Wider implementation and extension of the principle of debt and debt service reduction to cover all types of debts and countries,

- Reducing international real interest rates and correcting misalignment and volatility of major currencies with a view to bringing about international monetary and financial stabiliy.

On the topic of UNCTAD [United Nations Conference on Trade and Development] it said that it is essential that every effort be made to strengthen the effectiveness and relevance of UNCTAD in international and national policy-making. "At UNCTAD VIII," it said, "an action-oriented work program for international cooperation should be agreed upon. UNCTAD's role should be reinforced in the identification and analysis of emerging issues and the analysis of interdependence, in the formulation of national and international policy strategies for the develpment of developing countries and in the review of relevant policies of the other multilateral economic institutions.

Meanwhile the statement of ministers of the Group of 77 on economic cooperation among developing countries (ECDC) which complemented the Tehran declaration said the ministers assert ECDC is an indispensible complement to cooperation with developed countries in view of the economic situation and the difference in technlogical development between north and south.

The ministers said in their statement that in the present circumstances, in which initiatives are being taken in various regions with a view to promoting cooperation among developing and developed countries, there are sound pragmatic reasons for multiplying ECDC efforts. They added: "For a revitalized and strengthened ECDC a realistic appraisal of the past ECDC experiences and strategies is required in the context of a changing economic world scene, especially towards more interdependence and integration of economies and problems globally.

The statement of the ministers said in part:

"The ministers note that services, technology and environment are becoming increasingly important factors that impinge upon growth and developmment. Modalities for cooperation in these new sectors should be the subject of analysis and examination by developing countries within established mechanisms for cooperation.

"The ministers, convinced of the importance of the advisory and technical assistance provided by UNCTAD for ECDC activities, and the need to increase these activities in the short and medium term, commit themselves to strengthening UNCTAD's mandate in this sphere so as to enhance the work of the committee on ECDC, especially in relation to studies on problems and structural impediments such as weak transportation, marketing and distribution networks.

The ministers have invited the industrialized countries to support actively the implementation of projects of cooperation among developing countries, and call upon UNDP [United Nations Development Program] to contribute to the funding of those projects. It also urged the international community, particularly the developed countries and multilateral financial institutions, to support subregional and regional economic and technical cooperation efforts in developing countries.

Elsewhere in their statement the ministers called for further efforts by the chambers of commerce and industry of developing countries to intensity the flow of the investment and business information to support more cooperation among enterprises of developing countries. They reiterated the need for the establishment and functioning of a trade information system among the chambers of commerce and industry for the attainment of closer international links.

The ministers also reaffirmed the importance of Caracas program action (CPA) which paved the way for the establishment of a new phase in ECDC. They expressed satisfaction with the entry into operation of the "Manuel Perez Guerro" economic and technical cooperation trust fund which, they said, has given a considerable impulse to and support for furthering ECDC process.

Officials View Results of Meeting

LD2411185491 Tehran IRNA in English 1655 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] Tehran, Nov. 24, IRNA—Commerce Minister 'Abdol Hoseyn Vahaji said here today that the seventh meeting of the Group of 77 here last week had considered Iran's move for reducing international interest rates and for ending a chaotic situation in international parity rates. He said the attainment of those goals will be to the benefit of the developing countries. Vahaji said the developing countries pay large subsidies for their farm products in a bid to increase production which contribution, he said, is six times the aid of the same countries to the developing nations. He added that the Group of 77 ministers recommended corrective regulations to overcome the imbalance.

Other decisions of the Group of 77 meeting in Tehran last week, according to the Iranian commerce minister, was tax exemptions to those of the developing nations which have foreign debts, as well as helping indebted nations with their foreign debts, efforts for disarmament, the offering of technical assistance to member states of the group, and the pooling of efforts for combatting the negative impacts of pollution at the Persian Gulf.

Commenting personally on the new world order he said "if the order should happen to be of the kind we have in mind and if it should happen to be founded on justice, equity and equality and on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries then we will be sympathetic with it."

The commerce minister said in relation to a projected Asian economic community that the creation of the market among the Asian nations is a practicable hope at which all nations will be able to operate on a mutual or multi-lateral basis.

Sirus Naseri, Iran's envoy at the U.N. Headquarters in Geneva who also heads senior consultants at the group observed that the new world order is yet far from being

a clear-cut system but, he added, "If the current developments should prove an aid to economy and commerce and national development then they will be acceptable because the developments can potentially help the economic development of the world countries."

Deputy Minister of Commerce Mohammad Shariatmadari said by way of commenting on the cultural inroads of the West on other world nations that the transfer of western technology into other nations is an element which involves the exporting of western cultures to those countries. He commented that the countries relying on western technology should try to find out the ways and means for maintaining their own indigenous cultures against the perpetual inroads of foreign cultures.

Twenty cabinet ministers of member countries of the Group of 77 and 92 delegations participated at the seventh meeting of the group which ended in Tehran Saturday, he said.

Commentary Praises Session

NC2411095891 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Central News Unit Research Group commentary]

[Excerpts] In the name of God. The seventh ministerial meeting of the Group of 77 concluded in Tehran yesterday after eight days of expert deliberations and debates. Following the session, attended by experts and heads of delegations from 97 countries and international organizations, the views of Group of 77 member countries from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, were summed up in the Tehran Declaration. The declaration will be presented at the eighth session of the United Nations Conference for Trade and Development, UNCTAD, scheduled to meet in Bahman [20 February-20 March] in Colombia.

The session that just ended can be considered the largest economic congregation of developing countries in the wake of the recent politico-economic developments in the world. Since the last Group of 77 session in Havana, fundamental upheavals have taken place on the international political scene including the end of the cold war, the arms race, the propounding of a new world order, changes in Eastern Europe, and the declaration of the failure of centralized government economies and technological progress. In the developing countries, however, positive changes did not take place, their situation deteriorated even further. [passage omitted]

The developing countries' debt crisis has created complicated problems in the international economic scene. Debts currently exceed $1,300 billion. Debtor nations could not even pay the interest on these loans even if the debtor countries were to allocate the major part of their income for the repayment of their debts.

In the embryonic stage of the new world order, increasing and intense economic disparity between developed countries and Third World countries continues and the deep fissure between them in technology and on the economic plane threatens economic relations as well as international peace and security.

Efforts were made during the session to seek effective and practical solutions for closing the gap between the north and south. An important aspect of the Tehran Declaration is the consensus among Third World countries in highlighting the importance of economic cooperation among developing countries, which can play a constructive role in broadening politico-economic relations and resolving these countries' difficulties.

With Third World countries gaining access to international markets their subsequent economic growth will have a favorable effect on the world.

Pakistan

Policemen Killed in Ambush Meant for Bhutto

BK2311115691 Hong Kong AFP in English 1131 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Islamabad, Nov 23 (AFP)—Five policemen were shot dead in an ambush allegedly aimed at harming national opposition leader and former Premier Benazir Bhutto, her Pakistan People's Party (PPP) said Saturday.

The attack occurred on Tuesday while Bhutto was driving to her home town of Larkana in southern Sindh Province after a tour of her constituency, PPP's central secretariat based here said.

A police jeep patrolling Bhutto's route near Larkana was targetted ten minutes before she arrived at the point, killing a sub-inspector and four police constables, the party said.

In fact, this was an "ambush set up for the leader of the opposition" and the police jeep was attacked "on the mistaken assumption that she was travelling in that vehicle," the party said.

The party indirectly blamed Bhutto's bitter rivals, Sindh Chief Minister Jam Sadiq Ali and Irfanullah Marwat, an advisor to the chief minister and son-in-law of President Ghulam Ishaq Khan, for the attack.

It said a gang of bandits "harboured and controlled" by the duo had been given the task of "harassing" and "intimidating" the opposition leader.

This gang, operating under the supervision of a Sindhi landlord, had "rocketed and strafed" Bhutto's home at Naudero at least four times this year, the PPP said.

A manager at Bhutto's farm and four other people working on her lands were kidnapped two months ago and the bandits were demanding a ransom of 1.5 million rupees (60,000 dollars) for their release, the party said.

The PPP said some quarters were "determined to silence" the opposition leader through "intimidation and even physical elimination."

These tactics would not able to intimidate Bhutto, the party said.

"If, God forbid, any harm comes to Benazir Bhutto, the responsibility for the consequences would squarely be on (Prime Minister) Nawaz Sharif and Jam Sadiq Ali," the PPP warned.

The Sindh chief minister, a strong critic of Bhutto, returned home on Tuesday after prolonged medical treatment in London.

The PPP accuses him of waging a campaign of victimization against Bhutto and her family and party in Sindh.

'Positive, Useful' Talks With U.S. Noted

BK2311125191 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1600 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Mohammad Yamin commentary]

[Text] The talks that the visiting U.S. under secretary of state for international security affairs, Reginald Bartholomew, recently had at various levels in Pakistan has been described by Pakistan's foreign secretary as positive, useful, and constructive. The talks were as wide ranging as indeed they were in-depth and covered practically all matters of mutual interest such as the nuclear proliferation, growing tension between India and Pakistan over Kashmir, efforts to restore peace in Afghanistan, as also repairing the damage to U.S.-Pakistan relations that have been visible during the recent months. The talks cannot be described as decisive. In fact, they could not have been conclusive, as Mr. Bartholomew is to have discussions on most of the subjects with India as well, and a solution cannot possibily be found without the Indian participation. However, the significant outcome of the U.S.-Pakistan parleys is that both sides have agreed to continue the dialogue. Pakistan's foreign secretary hopes to be in Washington in two or three month's time to pick up the thread.

On the question of nuclear nonproliferation, Mr. Bartholomew has apparently carried a favorable impression of Pakistan's sincerity and the legitimacy of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's 6 June initiative and would hopefully stress on the Indian leadership the need for accepting the regional approach to the issue of nuclear nonproliferation, as a positive change has also occurred in the Soviet position on the issue of South Asia as a nuclear-weapon-free zone as witnessed at the UN General Assembly Political Committee where the Soviet Union voted for the first time in favor of Pakistan-sponsored resolution on the subject. One may expect that India might also be persuaded to come round to the Pakistan's point of view. If that was felt, there is no reason why the way would not be cleared for the removal of the major source of irritation between the United States and Pakistan. It would also vindicate Pakistan's position that it does not wish to be discriminated against in the matter of nuclear nonproliferation, particularly as India, having exploded a nuclear device 17 years ago, refuses to accept the restrictions which it wishes to be imposed on Pakistan. Mr. Bartholomew would also hopefully draw India's attention to the fact that it can no longer play up the China factor as China had already announced its willingness to sign the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Pakistan and the United States have a long history of close friendship and deep collaboration. Pakistan wishes to continue the friendship but of course cannot compromise on principles and cannot put its vital national interests at stake. It seeks to bridge the gap that has arisen in the state of their happy relations. The recent U.S.-Pakistan talks should go a long way to serve this purpose. Pakistan has repeatedly stressed that it not only respects the U.S. laws but also its perceptions on various international issues. On the question of nonproliferation of nuclear weapons, in fact there is a convergence of U.S. and Pakistan's perceptions. Pakistan is [word indistinct] for nonproliferation, but it also stands for a just and equitable treatment over the issue. It also has a genuine security concern which it expects its friends, particularly the United States, to appreciate.

The recent U.S.-Pakistan parleys are indicative of the U.S. realization of this aspect as the situation and their willingness to find a way to meet Pakistan's viewpoint at best halfway. A restoration in the warmth of U.S.-Pakistan relations is important not only from the bilateral angle but also from the viewpoint of international good will and amity.

Delegation Leaves for Soviet Asian Republics

BK2411154291 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 24 Nov 91

[Text] An eight-member Pakistani delegation has gone to Moscow for a visit to the Central Asian republics.

Speaking to newsmen before the departure, Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali, the leader of the delegation and the minister of state for economic affairs, said that the delegation is taking with it concrete proposals with the aim of promoting political, economic, cultural, and communications links. He added that they will also, on behalf of the prime minister, invite the leaders of these republics to visit Pakistan.

Cultural Cooperation Accord Signed With PRC

BK2311143491 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1400 GMT 23 Nov 91

[Text] Pakistan and PRC have signed an agreement for cultural cooperation in the fine arts, archaeology, education, sports, photography, microfilms, and youth affairs. Under the agreement, both countries will exchange cultural troupes, acrobats, craftsmen, and their handicrafts.

It will also give them the opportunity to benefit from their mutual experience in using computers for archaeological administration and environmental protection.

The agreement was signed by Federal Minister for Culture Sheikh Rashid Ahmad and PRC Deputy Cultural Minister Xu Wenbo in Islamabad today.

Sri Lanka

Government Offers Amnesty to LTTE Suspects

BK2211120891 Hong Kong AFP in English 1011 GMT 22 Nov 91

[Text] Colombo, Nov 22 (AFP)—The Sri Lanka Government Friday offered a fresh amnesty to suspected Tamil guerrillas who had fled areas brought under control by security forces.

Cabinet spokesman Ranil Wickremsinghe said the government had decided to grant the amnesty to all civilians who were involved with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) in islets surrounding the northern Jaffna peninsula.

"All those who are from the islands and who are in some way connected with the LTTE can go home under this amnesty," Wickremsinghe told reporters here.

He said the authorities believed that about a 1,000 civilians living in the islets were involved with the guerrillas in their campaign to set up a separate Tamil homeland.

The military seized several LTTE-held islets in the north during a major offensive last month leading to a virtual blockade of the strategic Jaffna peninsula which has been the main stronghold of the Tiger guerrillas.

Security forces have been ordered to make "necessary arrangements" for the safe return of the amnestied civilians, Wickremsinghe said.